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Contents

The Week 127

Editorials

The Christmas Holiday..... 130
Another Lesson in Coal..... 132
The Opium Problem: Postponed..... 133
Doing Something for the Farmer..... 134

General Articles

France's Financial Predicament
.....Ernest Minor Patterson 136
American Interiors.....Lewis Mumford 139
Unedited Opinions III: Religion in America.....
.....A. R. Orage 141
Words (verse) Babette Deutsch 142
The Most Important Book.....
.....Robert Haven Schauffler 143

A Communication 145
The Power of the Word.....R. M. L. 146
Correspondence 147
Christmas 1924 (verse) Witter Bynner 147

Reviews of Books

The Land of the Fathers.....Robert Littell 148
Impressions and Comments.....Robert Morss Lovett 149
Introducing Intelligence.....C. E. Ayres 150
Straws and Prayer-books.....Henry B. Fuller 151
Madness in the Diaphragm.....H. Phelps Putnam 152
Sard Harker Helen Goodspeed 152
The Return of Elsie.....E. V. 153
The Shirt.....E. V. 153
Red Dawn.....E. R. 153

The Week

DURING the past two weeks the administration has taken a great deal of trouble to cultivate friendly relations with the Japanese government and to discourage the noisy propaganda in this country on behalf of additional armaments, directed against Japan. Its energetic demonstrations have had a beneficial effect and have helped to relax a condition of strain which, if it had continued, might have brought unpleasant consequences. We do not for one moment believe that the anti-Japanese Americans who were demanding additional armaments were any but an insignificant proportion of the American people. The state of mind of the United States is at the present time on the whole profoundly pacific. The great majority of Americans do not believe that the way to pre-

serve peace is to act as if war were probable and desirable. But a few military and naval propagandists can with the assistance of the newspapers make a noise as loud as a great host, and unless they are blasted by a forbidding official frown they may well provoke recriminations in Japan and excite the latent truculence which forms such an essential part of our existing moral conventions. An official demonstration against the militant agitation was, consequently, highly desirable and Messrs. Coolidge and Hughes went about it in a thorough-going spirit and performed a workmanlike job.

THERE remains, however, much still to be done if the coöperation towards naval disarmament which was started in Washington during the fall of 1922 is to be continued. The Washington agreements constituted a tentative and unstable compromise which unless they are extended and reinforced cannot even be preserved. They permit a resumption of the old competition in certain important types of vessels and in many of the most effective devices of naval warfare. The time is clearly coming when the revision and improvement of the agreements will demand discussion, and it will be interesting to observe whether Mr. Coolidge will rise to the occasion. If he really wishes to discredit those Americans who are fomenting ill-feeling between this country and Japan, he cannot rest content with his oral and literary attempts to keep the spirit of peace. He will have to take the poison out of their propaganda by doing away, if possible, with the expedients which naval patrioteers can still employ to scare their fellow countrymen and to foment ill-feeling.

ALTHOUGH there have been no flaws in the handling by the Administration of American diplomatic relations with Japan, as much cannot be said of its naval strategy. The proposed manœuvres of the American fleet in the Pacific during the coming spring are shrewdly calculated and no doubt intended to cultivate apprehension and suspicion in Japan and naval vaingloriousness in the United States. In the event of war with Japan the American fleet will not be strong enough to operate in Asiatic waters and the Japanese fleet will not be strong enough to operate in American waters. The

kind of cruise which is now proposed cannot, consequently, prepare the fleet for the realities of future war in the Pacific. American naval strategy in the event of such a war would be defensive. The cruise is merely a bellicose and defiant gesture. The Japanese will feel about it much as we Americans would feel if a formidable and a threatening Japanese flotilla carried on war-like exercises in American waters and was hospitably entertained in Mexico and Canada. Any Japanese citizen can read in the Roosevelt records about the motives which prompted President Roosevelt to send on one former occasion a powerful American fleet across the Pacific and Japanese public opinion will naturally consider that a similarly threatening motive is responsible for the coming demonstration. President Coolidge will not succeed in improving the relations between the United States and Japan by speaking soothing words on one day and by pointing a few days later the spearhead of the American fleet directly at Japan.

WE trust, consequently, that at an early date and while Mr. Hughes is still Secretary of State, President Coolidge will summon a conference of the four governments which are most interested in naval armaments and which participated in the non-aggression compact of two years ago. There are political as well as military reasons for such a conference. Since the end of 1922 a kind of deadlock has existed in the relations between China and the foreign world. Japanese aggression has become less threatening than it was, but nothing has been done to promote the proposed reforms looking towards the increasing economic and political independence of China. There is on the contrary an increasing demand for renewed intervention in China—an intervention which will be disguised under the beneficent appearance of a Dawes plan. The questions which are raised by the existing condition of China in its relation to Europe and Japan are assuming a form which has no doubt already become a subject of international negotiation; and it is certainly better to have this most important negotiation conducted in public at a conference and as a part of an additional disarmament agreement than to have it discussed privately and separately.

THE British Conservatives have taken their overwhelming victory at the polls as a mandate for the introduction of the tariff policy which was once proposed by Bonar Law and was the chief cause for his ignominious defeat. The development as announced by Mr. Baldwin in a speech the importance of which seems to have been largely overlooked by the American daily press, is to be a gradual and cautious one. Domestic industries are to be protected one by one as they are able to demonstrate that they deserve such treatment; and only then to a limited degree and in an experimental fashion. The other and more important half of the policy, at least at pres-

ent, is a system of imperial preference. Among imports, goods from the Dominions are to be favored over those from other parts of the world: a scheme which is obviously an attempt to knit the Commonwealth of Nations more closely together, both economically and politically. However, Mr. Baldwin says frankly that British public opinion has not yet been educated to the point of accepting tariffs on foodstuffs, and these are therefore indefinitely postponed. Among immediate developments the chief will be the restoration of some of the post-war "emergency" tariffs which had been abolished by the Labor government.

THE United States, of course, is in no position to criticize the new British policy (which is, after all, not so new as it sounds, since Great Britain has not hesitated to lay duties in recent years whenever she felt they were desirable—as, for example, against imports from Germany). America is now the leading high tariff country of the world, and we cannot cavil if other nations choose to follow our example. At the same time, the new British policy may give us a painfully vivid object lesson as to the way in which trade is restricted by high tariff policies. Great Britain is an important customer of ours for manufactures, foodstuffs, and raw materials. The plans of the Baldwin government ultimately intend that the manufactures shall be produced at home and the foodstuffs, cotton, wool, etc., in the Dominions. We shall get more than a taste of our own medicine; and it is altogether probable that we shall not like it.

CHRISTMAS week has brought anything but peace in Europe. France is hysterically alarmed over the expectation, which seems to be quite groundless, of Communist uprisings in her chief cities. Germany is struggling with the difficult task of forming a coalition with enough power behind it to produce a government. Austria is in the throes of a severe business depression. In Italy Mussolini, faced by a rapid dwindling of his power and popularity, has taken action which is supposed to foreshadow a general election within the next ninety days. Albania, fighting border raiders who, she charges, are instigated by Yugoslavia has appealed for relief to the League of Nations. Fear of Bolshevik activities is producing a Pan-Balkan alliance among Yugoslavia, Rumania and Bulgaria which is announced at the moment when the Pope delivers an extraordinary blast against the Communists on the ground of their anti-religious activities. Russia itself continues to be agitated over the question of Trotzky, now cooling his heels in the Crimea. Add to this category of trouble the North African difficulties of Spain, England's dispute with Egypt, the continuing bad blood between Greece and Turkey, the quarrel between Turkey and Great Britain over the Irak boundary, resurgent Indian nationalism, the Chinese war, now only temporarily in abey-

ance, the tension between Japan and the United States—and you have as much gloom as the most confirmed pessimist could ask, with which to start the New Year.

ELECTION day did not end the Progressive campaign. The Conference for Progressive Political Action had already decreed that a later meeting should be held, whatever the outcome of the election, this meeting being for the purpose of deciding whether or not a permanent party should be attempted. A conference was held in Washington a short time ago, and decided that this question should be settled at a subsequent gathering in Chicago late in February. What action will then be taken it is of course impossible to predict. Some of the elements which participated in the LaFollette-Wheeler campaign are admittedly disheartened and wish to withdraw, this feeling being particularly strong among the railroad brotherhoods. Others argue that considering the small funds, the impromptu character of the national organization and the brief period of less than four months, a vote of four and a half millions, or about one in seven of the total vote, is an achievement of which anybody might be proud.

AMONG the problems particularly discussed at Washington was the future policy of Progressive women. Should they form a completely independent organization of their own? Or should they remain inside the general group, insisting on complete equality with the men?—something which they feel they by no means had during the campaign just closed. Both these points of view were strongly represented at the Washington gathering. Our own opinion is heartily in favor of the second course. The objects sought by the Progressives would benefit everyone, men and women alike. No such reason exists for creating a separate organization of women as lay behind the Woman's Party, or the National League of Women Voters. Indeed, equal participation and responsibility by men and women ought to be one of the principles of the Progressive party, if and when formed.

SAMUEL GOMPERS is dead, but his spirit goes marching on. William Green, Secretary-Treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America, who has just been elected President of the American Federation of Labor, is a rigid Conservative of the Gompers type. Not only did he oppose the endorsement of LaFollette in the late campaign, but his face is set against all commercial activities by labor unions, such as the labor banks, and the coal mining operations of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. While we regret the fact that the A. F. of L. is in for another term of strictly economic trade unionism, during which it will continue to be solely concerned with securing what benefits it can for the members of particular unions at particular

times, the event is neither unexpected nor unnatural. The membership of the A. F. of L., representing the best paid members of the skilled trades, is the most conservative wing of American labor. For the past thirty years the movement has been "on the make," and very successfully so. Such conditions inevitably produce the sort of policies which Gompers and Green have followed. That period, unless we are gravely mistaken, is nearly ended. But in the meantime, it is easy to understand why the attitude of a man like Green meets the approval of the A. F. of L. leaders, however wrong and objectionable it may seem to a minority of the rank and file.

THERE is now some hope that the Underwood Muscle Shoals bill may go over until the next session of Congress. The Progressives are lined up solidly against it; and since the last thing the administration forces want is a filibuster, they had rather have a postponement than to find their other projects for this session blocked. We believe it is wholly in the public interest that the Underwood bill should go over until next December. The more one considers this measure the worse it looks. Senator Norris charges that from the terms of the present proposal the development would almost certainly come under control of the General Electric Company, and that the latter organization is securing an enormous influence upon electric power resources in the United States. These are serious allegations and should be thoroughly sifted before irrevocable action is taken. It is further stated that the Underwood bill gives carte blanche to the lessee as to where and to whom it will sell its electric power; and seems to leave the whole project subject to no other restrictions than those which might be imposed by the state authorities of Alabama. There is not even an assurance that the limited amount of nitrates for fertilizer will be produced at a reasonable rate. The lessee would be limited to eight percent on each "turnover," which might mean very dear fertilizer indeed. At the same time, no limit is set on the amount of profit which can be earned in relation to the original investment. If the Ford offer was undesirable and deserved to be rejected, as now seems to be generally agreed, the Underwood bill is unquestionably just as bad and should meet the same fate.

THE dance of the statesmen over the question of French debts to Great Britain and the United States would be amusing if such important relationships were not bound up with it. Great Britain hears that the United States is considering funding the French debt on better terms than those under which the British debt is being paid off. Promptly she demands equality of treatment; and supplements this by the announcement that France must match every payment to the United States with one to Great Britain. Next, the cables carry the news that the

Baldwin government is offering highly advantageous terms to France if the latter country will get to work seriously on the question of her obligations. This time, the howl of protest comes from Washington. America demands equality of treatment with Great Britain. And so on, and so on. The whole debate, of course, is political in character and intended for political effect. The financiers know that France won't be in a position to pay anybody a penny for a decade to come. Even if she were, she will be in no hurry to discharge an obligation which seems to her unfair, since in her interpretation, the money was borrowed and spent in prosecuting a struggle "to save civilization" which was quite as much in the interest of her allies as herself.

MOREOVER, the French cannot fail to have learned something about international finance since 1918. They have discovered that debts between nations are uncollectible except by military force, and perhaps not even then. And military force costs more than any debt is worth. Therefore, payments must be voluntary; which means that the debtor, practically speaking, can set his own terms. Great Britain played the honorable part in arranging terms with America; and is staggering under the enormously heavy burden which was thereby laid upon her. Germany, feeling that her cause was hopeless anyhow, elected not to pay more than the allies could take from her by force; and it is altogether likely that she will escape without turning over any great additional sum. France is therefore at liberty to choose. She may voluntarily step into jail and serve a long sentence; or she may remain free and apparently be none the worse off for doing so. Evidently the ethics of capitalism need revision when they come to be applied to international affairs.

NOW we have four years of Republican rule ahead, are we not assured of four years of prosperity? The Cleveland Trust Company Business Bulletin publishes a comment in point. In the last forty years we have lived twenty-four years under Republican administration, sixteen under Democratic. There have been recurrent alterations of prosperity and depression; have they corresponded with the political complexion of the administration? No. Under the Republicans fifty-five percent of the months have been marked by prosperity, forty-five by depression. Precisely the same percentages hold for the Democratic years. Employment has been as satisfactory or unsatisfactory under the one party as under the other. On the heels of the Harding landslide of 1920, with its promise of high tariff, came the great slump of 1921. Politics has less effect on economics than the politicians—especially during a few months of every fourth year—would have us believe. The greater the pity that their propaganda is swallowed so readily.

The Christmas Holiday

THE two outstanding festivals of the Christian year are Christmas, the anniversary of the day on which Jesus was born, and Easter, the celebration of the day on which He underwent, in the minds of His humble followers, a second and more victorious creation. The two festivals differ profoundly both in their nature and in the meaning of the piously remembered event. It may be worth while to pause for a moment during the holiday season and consider what the difference is and what light it throws on the parts which Christianity plays in the lives of ordinary Christians.

The Christmas festival belongs, of course, essentially to the people and to the fireside. The churches hold services on the morning of December 25 in which there is probably more singing and less preaching than usual, but what the congregations mean by the holiday is not and does not need to be celebrated in any ecclesiastical building. Wherever there is lively, attentive and articulate good feeling within a family and among friends, there the fuel exists which gives warmth and light to the Christmas festivity. Those who share in the festival gather spontaneously around the fireside and express in acts of simple generosity their good will towards relatives and friends but particularly towards their children. They remember also the poor, but only as dependents towards whom they are benevolently disposed. The characteristic vehicle of Christmas benevolence is a personal gift—a gift which at its best expresses not merely the kindness and the generosity of the giver but an insight into the needs of the recipient. The person to whom Christmas brings the liveliest pleasure is the one who divines what other people would like and has the means to satisfy their wishes. In addition to this rare personal aspect of the Christmas festival there is, of course, a large ingredient of indiscriminate and abounding good fellowship which induces most men and some women to put their ordinary scruples aside and to present themselves with an abundance of good things to eat and drink.

On Christmas day, that is, the natural kindness and expansiveness of human nature find expression by the most obvious and least critical routes. Quite simply we give more or less freely to other people, not what may be good for them but what they are likely to want, and we satisfy these generous impulses particularly at the expense of children and the poor who do not possess the means of obtaining what they want for themselves. This natural kindness is released through vehicles which in origin are partly pagan and partly Christian. When the pagan wished to represent by some symbolic act his good will towards all his world and towards himself, he almost always waxed convivial. He ate and drank more than was good for him—sufficient at any rate to soothe his grievances and drown his sorrows. He used this perfectly natural

and appropriate way to proclaim how absurd and wonderful life is and how much more wonderful and impossible it would be if we could always satisfy all the desires of our hearts. Later Christianity grafted some of its own more sophisticated aspirations on this pagan stock. Benevolence bulks large in Christianity, and one obvious way to express benevolence is not only to eat and drink ourselves into a condition of cheerful stupefaction but to ease our own consciences and beguile the unrest of other people with burnt and unburnt offerings. Both ways of bringing down peace to earth and good will to men lend themselves to poetic expression, and both are responsible for a great deal of solid sleepy human happiness. In fact as it is celebrated Christmas represents about as much of Christian loving kindness as human beings today are capable without effort and without reflection of converting into the cash of immediate satisfaction.

Easter, as compared with Christmas, is an essentially ecclesiastical holiday. Although it is presumably descended from the spring festivals which were common to so many pagan peoples of temperate climates, it is much more officially Christian than is Christmas. The appropriate scenery for its ceremonies is a church, and the people who piously assemble would be lost without the comfort of a priest to tell them what they have assembled to be joyful about. They are celebrating not the familiar memorable fact of a cherished birthday but the spiritual project of a re-birthday. Those among the pious assembly whose own experience has hinted to them what regeneration is may experience during the Easter ceremony a far more intense and exhilarating joy than any similar feeling which they obtain from Christmas, but the great majority of Christians piously contemplate the symbolic drama of the Resurrection without undergoing any emotional enhancement which naturalizes the symbolic process in their own hearts. So, while they are perfectly willing to rejoice on a spring morning, they cannot associate their natural jubilation at the return of spring with the resurrection of Jesus Christ except with the help of eloquent exhortation. Easter is intended to celebrate the second nature which they may create as the result of discipline and aspiration. They can hardly be expected to welcome it with the same spontaneity and enthusiasm that they welcome a festival like Christmas which assumes that they can be good and happy merely by taking the trouble to be born and to give and receive according to the measure of their likes.

That Christians can celebrate at one season of the year the natural goodness and inexpensive happiness of human life and at another its tragic impotence and the necessity of dying and being reborn in order to be saved affords a sufficient indication of the adaptability of the Christian church. Both in its Catholic and Protestant incarnations it has in one way or another known how to cultivate side by side what appeared to be fundamental but

incompatible human needs. It has never for long allowed its absorbing affirmation of Christ crucified and resurrected as a symbol of redemption to become a sufficient excuse for alienating or disqualifying the spiritually less hardy members of the Christian body. It has always recognized the good standing in the City of God of those Christians who behaved as if they themselves and other people were naturally good enough and felt no impulse to pursue an artificial and costly search for salvation. While keeping steadily in view its characteristic project of regenerating human nature through a judicious mixture of individual discipline with the divine grace, it has conceded spacious standing room in the Christian sanctuary for the people whose chief ambition is to present themselves and other people with an abundance of cakes and ale and personal furniture. It has preferred to provide for these natural pagans as indifferent conformists rather than as blasphemous or defiant rebels.

The resulting dualism of Christianity is notorious and brings in its train losses as well as gains. The Christian church has considered the nominal authority which it has exercised over the beliefs and conduct of indifferent Christians by recognizing the double standard as a safer way of promoting popular Christianity than would be the more tense but more undisputed authority that it might obtain by insisting on the necessity of the arduous but exhausting obligation of a regenerate life. While this policy may have been justifiable in the past, it is likely to be less successful in the future. It looks as if the Christian church would soon need to seek a new balance between the assets and liabilities which its traditional compromise involves. But if its accountants should discover an excess of liabilities and should propose the substitution of a single Christian standard, they would only substitute one difficulty for another. The Christian church cannot dispense with a double standard unless its prophets can discover some formative activity in human nature which, if methodically cultivated, will start sincere Christians moving in the direction of self-regeneration with ardor and insight. This task Christian teachers were in a position to evade so long as common fundamental dogmas provided a sufficient bond of unity for the members even of Protestant denominations, but they cannot continue to evade it now that the last shreds of any community of conviction are being blown away by storms of controversy and now that non-religious activity and ends are competing more strenuously and methodically than formerly for the allegiance of serious people. Good Christians will, we hope, continue to celebrate both Christmas and Easter, but if Christianity is to retain its vitality the church will have to find some way of infusing into Easter a little more of the popular spontaneous feeling of Christmas and into Christmas a more popular understanding of what peace on earth and good will to men actually cost.

Another Lesson in Coal

MANY employers are rejoicing in the predicament in which labor has found itself through the controversy between John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers and Warren S. Stone of the Locomotive Engineers. Mr. Stone, in the course of his adventures into trade-union capitalism, acquired some months ago a bituminous coal property in the Kanawha district of West Virginia, known as the Coal River Collieries. This was organized as a separate concern, in which officers and members of the engineers' brotherhood were induced to invest over \$3,000,000. The project was widely heralded at the beginning as a commendable extension of union activities, and it was hoped that at last an element of reason was to enter the troubled West Virginia coal regions. Almost from the beginning, however, controversies appeared between the miners' union and the collieries. The quarrel has now developed into a deadlock so serious that the American Federation of Labor at its recent convention was forced to intervene on behalf of the miners and appoint an investigating committee. And the commentators are gleefully pointing out that labor leaders who become employers are just as unyielding as private owners and that labor is in for a salutary lesson in economics.

Both Mr. Lewis and Mr. Stone are strong personalities, trained to be stubborn in a fight, and their correspondence over the Coal River situation has been punctuated by bitter charges of the sort usually found in arguments between employer and employe. There is scarcely any form of misbehavior attributed to coal operators or unionists in the past which is not alleged to have been practised in this instance. Such scandal is regrettable and injurious enough to all concerned, but if that were all it would be unworthy of extended comment by friends of the labor movement. Labor usually liquidates its own internal squabbles in the long run, and is not helped in doing so by even the best meant advice.

It is by this time a commonplace that the bituminous coal industry is over-developed. The average miner is idle a good part of the time except in periods of abnormally high demand. It has been estimated that if about one-quarter of the better mines were worked regularly they could supply the market, with a saving of about 250,000 men. The over-development has been caused partly by market conditions, partly by inadequate transportation and storage facilities, but chiefly by the war boom and by the long strikes which have left non-union territory free to supply the shortage. The Coal Commission made certain suggestions, probably inadequate, to remedy this condition, and various other projects extending even as far as complete nationalization, have been put forward. But the permanent organs of government have done nothing. The officials of the miners' union itself, which is the chief

sufferer from the resulting evils, have neither entertained any suggestion for basic reorganization of the industry nor put forward one of their own. On the contrary, they have been content with denouncing as "revolutionary," or as unwarranted governmental interference, every proposal made by others.

At the end of the last national strike, in 1922, a collective agreement was reached, known as the "Jacksonville agreement," to which all union operators have been forced to subscribe. It was hailed as a victory for the miners because it retained the peak wage scale of 1919. The strategy of the miners' union since then has been to maintain this scale at all costs, and at the same time to use the respite furnished by the agreement in an attempt to extend its control over the hitherto unorganized fields. It was hoped that this strategy would keep enough mines out of production so that the union fields might hold the market and the rest might be permanently eliminated. In this way the over-expansion might be deflated and a thorough union control, necessary to any plan which could protect the miners' interests, might be established.

This was bold if crude strategy, depending for its effectiveness on the old and tried trade-union methods of organization and collective bargaining. In spite of the difficulties of extending the union furnished by the legal and extra-legal activities of operators, and in spite of the obstacles characterizing the battle ground itself, it deserved a thorough trial. But unless something unforeseen develops before the expiration of the agreement next summer, it will have registered a complete and possibly a disastrous failure. The demand for coal has not been sufficient to keep a major section of the industry busy. The union, instead of organizing new territory and keeping non-union mines out of production, has actually lost ground. The result has been just the opposite of that intended. Non-union mines, not only paying wages less than those specified in the Jacksonville agreement, but actually cutting them to the bone, have supplied a rapidly increasing volume of coal to the markets, and many mines paying the union scale have either been unable to get orders or have found it unprofitable to operate at the prices they could charge. The idle mines have been the union ones, and if permanent elimination is to follow it will be at the expense of union control.

The Coal River Collieries are in a field where non-union competition is heavy. Mr. Stone, of course, believes in unionization in the abstract, and in any case would be forced by his constituents to act as if he did. His objection is not to recognizing the union, but to paying the union scale. His case is stated when he writes:

Under the Jacksonville agreement of 1924, it costs \$1.63 per ton [to mine coal and load it on cars] without charging for any overhead or any return on the investment. The average price at which coal is selling

f.o.b. is \$1.50 per ton—not much incentive to open a mine or work it under those conditions.

And as Mr. Stone says, the union men who have invested their money in this enterprise "are entitled to some return on their investment." To which Mr. Lewis replies just what he has been replying to other employers, and just what his strategy forces him to reply:

The United Mine Workers cannot be responsible for problems of management in which they have no voice. The question of efficient management and low cost of production to enable you to remain in the market with competing coal companies is one that must be dealt with by your corporation. It is a problem that ever confronts one who elects to become a coal operator.

So far as Mr. Lewis is concerned, it is of no consequence if operators are forced out of the coal business. In fact, that is just what he desires. He cannot extend to the locomotive engineers any immunity from the harsh logic which he is attempting to apply to the industry as a whole.

Granted the position in which each man found himself at the beginning of the controversy, it is difficult to see how either could have acted differently. Mr. Stone is morally responsible for the safety of the \$3,000,000 invested at his recommendation. Mr. Lewis, if he once countenances a reduction of the union scale to accommodate a friend, must grant the same privilege to all operators. And once wage-cutting is started in a situation like this, there is no end to it until only those mines remain in production whose employees will accept a bare minimum of subsistence and whose other costs are on the lowest possible level. Three-quarters of these might easily be non-union.

There is no pat solution for a problem like this, but it would be a pity if the dramatic nature of the crisis did not cause both sides to reconsider earnestly their fundamental strategy before they become involved in far more serious trouble. Other coal operators will in the long run be forced to act with greater firmness than Mr. Stone. Would it not be wise for the miners to look more carefully into the possibility of other methods for restricting cut-throat competition in their industry than the one they have been so unsuccessfully employing for over two years? And union investments might easily drift into other enterprises where maintaining a fair return to the investors will necessitate decisions diametrically opposed to labor's just and essential demands. Would it not be forehanded for the labor capitalists to investigate thoroughly the broader economic and social consequences of their activities before becoming involved in important commitments? If use of the power of capital by labor is to turn out any better than its use by any one else, labor must devise such policies of industrial reorganization that employers may cooperate with employees and both may have their due.

The Opium Problem: Postponed

MANY Americans must have experienced a sinking of the heart last week when the news was cabled that the League of Nations' second opium conference had been adjourned for a month. True, optimists may argue that a Christmas recess was natural, and may point out that in the meantime committees are continuing to work. But the fact remains that the conference was close to a breakdown, and probably would have reached an actual impasse if its labors had continued much longer. And we cannot forget that the first conference, in which America did not participate, settled only two of the six points on its agenda; and that even the agreement embodying these two points has not yet been signed.

The Americans went to Geneva determined upon two things. First, they were resolved that the world's production of habit-forming drugs ought to be curtailed to what is actually needed for medicinal and scientific use, which is only a very small fraction of what is being produced today. In previous years, the waters have invariably been muddied by making the phrase read, "legitimate use," which at once opens the door for an unending discussion as to what uses are and are not legitimate. The second American demand was that among Oriental native populations which smoke opium, the traffic be brought to an end within the next ten years, by curtailing the production and distribution of the drug 10 percent per annum for a decade.

This proposal of course could only be acted upon at the first conference, composed of the opium-producing nations, of which the United States is not one. The conference rejected the suggestion decisively, on the plea that it is impossible for the great powers to move with such speed as would be necessary to follow the American schedule—an argument which can only be regarded as specious. The real forward step taken by the first conference, and one of much importance, was the declaration that the production and distribution of opium in the Orient must become a strict government monopoly. This action may ultimately prove of the highest importance. The wickedest government is not likely to be so debased in foisting the drug upon innocent victims as are the private individuals who now profit from creating additional users. This agreement, while it has not yet been signed, probably will be.

While this concession is important, it is the only one thus far made to the American point of view. The great nations represented in the two conferences are not yet ready, as their action clearly shows, to begin to do away with the use of opium among Oriental natives who are under their "protection." The usual radical statement that they hesitate to cut themselves off from the governmental revenue involved in continuing the traffic is

probably a good deal less than the whole truth. Far more important, on the whole, is the political aspect. In India, for example, the Nationalist leaders are bitterly opposed to the opium traffic; but among the mass of the population there are millions of users whose already high state of discontent and dissatisfaction with the white man and all his ways would be greatly increased, at least temporarily, if the drug were cut off.

China represents another enormously difficult phase of the problem. Most of the good work of the years preceding the Great War has been nullified lately because of an enormous increase in illegal poppy culture and opium manufacture in various provinces, where it is an important source of revenue for some of the Tutchuns. The size of the present traffic was probably greatly exaggerated in reports made not long ago; but it is true that large amounts of opium are now being produced and used in China; and that the traffic is beyond the power of either Peking or Canton to control.

Against these discouraging factors can be set only one reason for hope, but an important one. That is the development of world opinion against the drug traffic—a world opinion of which the United States is the forefront. A generation ago, the reformers were on the defensive; today it is the diplomats who feel they must apologize for their action in urging even a postponement of the final blow. Public opinion is a weapon on which it is of course dangerous to rely too completely. It is often less effective than it is supposed to be; and indeed, cynics are still to be found who deny that as an effective agency of reform it exists at all. Yet no student of history can deny that it has helped in the last century to abolish, or greatly to ameliorate, many evils; and it is already beginning to come to bear on the problem of habit-forming drugs.

Even during the first conference at Geneva, a month ago, it made itself felt. The ruling out of the American proposal to consider cutting off the opium traffic in the course of ten years by reductions of 10 percent each year created a storm with which Geneva is still reverberating. As a direct result, the question is to be put on the agenda of the second conference when it reconvenes. The mills of the gods grind so slowly that movement is sometimes quite invisible; but they do grind.

Doing Something for the Farmer

OF plans for helping the farmer we had a plethora, in the period just preceding the election. His credit facilities were to be improved. His efforts at coöperative marketing were to be encouraged. Something was to be done to relieve him from the burdens of taxation which weigh him down more heavily year by year. There was much

agitation for a general revision of freight rates, which should transfer part of the charges now resting on farm products to the more valuable products of industry. The St. Lawrence ship canal and the Lakes-to-the-Gulf deep waterway were advanced as indirect means of attaining the same end. Then there was the McNary-Haugen bill, with its plan of valorization behind the shelter of the tariff, to satisfy the extremists.

All these projects sound rather remote today. What survives is a general feeling that something ought to be done to help the farmer. Just now the concrete proposal that seems farthest on the road to execution is the erection of a world's temple to agriculture in Chicago. It is to cost \$30,000,000, have a convention hall seating 20,000 persons, a commercial hotel with 3500 rooms, and a broadcasting tower as tall as the Eiffel Tower in Paris. There would of course be ample provision for the exhibit of prize corn and wheat, chickens and ducks and geese, and whatever else symbolizes the farmer triumphed over by his material. Some temple! We forbear to emphasize the fact that the finest temples have always been erected in days of flagging religious feeling, to gods on the point of extinction. There is something monumental about a temple, funereally monumental. God save the mark!

What has turned the public interest in agriculture to trivialities like this is the rising price of agricultural products. A year ago wheat sold at less than a dollar and a quarter; today it is very near two dollars. Corn was under ninety cents; it is now nearly a dollar and a half. Cotton was twenty-two cents; now it is thirty-five. Most of the corn and wheat, to be sure—and much of the cotton—was sold by the producer at far lower prices. But the current quotations offer a promise for the future. Besides, other agricultural products, which have not all been sold out, like meat and milk, potatoes and vegetables, have risen in sympathy. Potentially if not actually the farmer is at least 50 percent better off than he was a year ago. Most people a year ago felt that the farmer's position needed improving, but scarcely anyone demanded an improvement in excess of 50 percent. Accordingly the present apathy toward the agricultural problem is natural, if not justified.

It is not justified, if we take the future into our calculations. The peculiar characteristic of agricultural prices is their extreme sensitiveness. What appears to be a minor cause produces immense effects upon them. A striking instance is afforded by the present upward flight of agricultural staples. As everyone knows, the world had a short harvest. How far did it fall short? The November estimates of the Department of Agriculture placed the world's wheat yield at 2738 million bushels, as compared with 3045 million bushels for 1923 and 2725 million bushels, the average of 1909-13. The shortage is only one percent as compared with a year when all agricultural prices sagged under the

plethora of wheat. There is a more serious shortage of rye, 702 million bushels produced in Europe as compared with 826 million in 1923 and 976 million in the normal years 1909-13. But the shortage in bread grains, taken as a whole, will fall well under 2 percent.

It may be said it is not only the falling off in supply, but also the increase in demand, due to the revival of European business, that accounts for the rise in farm prices. There can be no doubt that European business is improving gradually. But we defy any expert to produce figures of increased production, exports and imports that will appear sufficient on their face to explain the advance in agricultural prices. Those prices respond so sensitively to minor causes that they are, for all practical purposes, unpredictable. They are soaring now. Another year they are just as likely as not to collapse. Essentially they are a gamble. And every farmer who stakes his effort on the production of cash crops is forced to play the rôle of gambler, however unfitted he may be for that rôle, by temperament and principles.

It will be said that the farmer has always been exposed to the vicissitudes of the season and the fluctuations of prices. So he has, but this does not argue that no new problem has arisen. In our early history, as in the peasant economy of a great part of contemporary Europe, there was a large element of self-sufficiency in the farmer's life. He produced his own food and clothing and built or repaired his own house. Luxuries from a distance were few and taxes negligible. The farmer appeared on the market only with the surplus over his consumption; he took in exchange for it articles that were not strictly necessary to his existence. The terms of the exchange were important, but not vital.

Our American farmers of today are just as definitely dependent on the market as any other business men. Whether they prosper or go bankrupt depends on the prices they get and the cost of the things they buy. The unruly plunges upward or downward of prices affect them as farmers in earlier times and the peasants of present day Europe were not affected.

Other producers have found the fluctuations of uncontrolled prices too ghastly a care to be tolerated. They have proceeded even in spite of the law when the law appeared to be against them, to establish a fair degree of price stability. Thus while wheat has been behaving, through the last year, like a kite in a March wind, steel billets have been quoted at forty dollars, day by day, week by week, monotonously. We might as well call them legal tender and be done with them. Copper and tin and lead, materials very sensitive to economic fluctuations, have varied in price from 10 to 20 percent. Among finished manufactures few have shown so wide a range of prices.

All business is something of a gamble, but farm-

ing is the biggest gamble of all. Does anyone imagine that this is a desirable condition? Is it for the public good that the farmer should sow his crops next spring in hope, and as like as not harvest them in despair? Is it to be expected that we shall long maintain a healthy balance between agriculture and industry when the one presents no predictable relation between effort and reward while the other presents a high degree of security?

We need to get over our comfortable delusion that the farmer is well enough off, because good years balance bad, high prices balance low, in the long run. The farmer, like everyone else, is dominated in his feelings and action by the facts of the day, not by the probabilities of the long run. Insecurity is his bane, under the conditions of contemporary living. The high prices now prevailing are no solution of his problem. They are merely one aspect of it, of which the other aspect is the slump in prices that may at any time supervene.

A reasonable degree of stability in agricultural prices is essential to our national economic health. How that stability may be attained is a hard question to answer. That it is not unanswerable appears clearly from the fact that the forces of supply to be controlled are relatively small, in comparison with their effects. It would not be an operation of overwhelming magnitude for the governments of the wheat consuming countries to impound two or three percent of the supply in years of large harvests and release it in years made relatively barren by drought or flood. Equally costly undertakings of far less public importance are put through by the governments without flinching.

We ought to get over the notion that all that is required is to "do something for the farmer." The seasoned farmer will manage to rock along, and his sons will manage to find places for themselves in the city. What we ought to set about is doing something for the nation, by insuring the conditions of a healthy and permanent agriculture. For those who see the problem in this light, the farmers' cries of distress or murmurs of contentment are alike irrelevant. These vary with the season, but the national problem is always with us.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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HERBERT CROLY, PRES., ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREAS.,
DANIEL MEBANE, CIRCULATION MANAGER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON R. M. LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY R. H. TAWNEY
DAVID FRIDAY H. N. BRAILSFORD LEO WOLMAN

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France's Financial Predicament

SINCE the close of the war, and particularly from 1921 to 1924, Germany has been the center of interest for students of international economics. Inflation of currency, government bankruptcy, depressed trade, unemployment, and finally the Dawes plan, have made that unhappy country a place where economic and social phenomena displayed themselves in such bewildering variety and such great intensity as to attract and at the same time baffle the student.

Unfortunately, all is not yet well with the Germans, though there is some improvement. Unemployment has decreased, government finances are better, reparation obligations are being met by payments to the account of Agent-General Gilbert (albeit with the powerful aid of the 800 million mark loan), and the tension is somewhat relaxed. Problems galore are undoubtedly ahead, but for a time France may occupy world thought. Rising prices, new loans at home and abroad, and discussion of her debts to England and the United States are in our minds. Premier Herriot and M. Clemenceau may have undertaken the task too late, but their struggle is a heroic one. Without forecasting the outcome an analysis of what they are facing is possible.

First in importance is to realize that the difficulty is not one of general economic depression. French iron and steel production is greater than in pre-war days, agriculture is in good condition, and the textile industries are thriving. The output of coal is large. There is no unemployment, nor has there been any of importance since the end of the war. Reconstruction work in the war areas is largely, though not entirely, completed. This intense activity may be healthy and normal, or it may be a feverish and dangerous condition comparable to that in Germany during 1922, but its existence is not open to dispute. It is so generally agreed that French troubles are financial and closely identified with actual or prospective currency inflation that we need not attempt proof. We may, however, refer briefly to the signs of distress, since they are escaping attention in the United States.

Wholesale prices that fell to 319 in 1922 (1913 = 100) rose to 394 for 1923, to 483 in March, 1924, and then, after a temporary decline, again rose to 487 in August, 496 in September, and 507 by the end of October. An internal loan only now being floated shows that the government must pay about 8.60 percent for funds. The recent \$100,000,000 loan sold in America yields 7.53 percent to the investor who purchased at the issue price, and of course costs the French government considerably more. On the Paris market government bonds have steadily declined. The 1918 Fours which earlier in the year were at 60.50 were re-

cently at 50.55. The 1920 Sixes have fallen to 75 from a recent high of 88.15. The official index of 56 securities with fixed yield shows a level of 61.3 for August, 59.4 for September, and 57 for the end of October. Yet these depressing signs appear at a time when we are told that the budget is greatly improving, and while francs are rising on the New York market. Are these other indices of distress wrong? Are the weather prospects good and the trouble merely with the barometers?

Since current observation centres so much on inflation, it is well to remind ourselves that this much abused word and its companion, depreciation, may be used in three different ways. A currency may depreciate in terms of the standard money of the country; i. e., gold. This is reflected clearly in the price of gold in terms of the currency in case there is a free gold market. In the United States gold sold for greenbacks at 258 in 1864. In October of this year gold sold in London at 92 shillings per ounce, which may be compared with a "par" of 77s. 9d. That the French paper franc is thus depreciated is of course well known, although the extent of the depreciation and daily fluctuations are not a matter of record, since there is no open gold market.

A currency may depreciate in terms of the money of another country. This is reflected in the foreign exchange quotations, and in the case of the franc was particularly serious about nine months ago, when the quotation in New York fell rapidly to 3.42—to rise later to 6.84 and finally steady itself at about 5.25. Since the recent \$100,000,000 loan it has gradually risen to about 5.50 at the present writing.

Finally, a currency may depreciate in terms of commodities for which it is exchanged, a fact that is shown by a rise in the general price level. As already noted, this form of depreciation is continuing in France.

There are, then, three kinds of currency depreciation, but for only two of them do we have records. At present one—the New York quotation for francs—shows an improvement. The other—the French commodity price level—is unfavorable. What may we conclude? These two are closely interrelated, but they may and do possess distinct characteristics.

A rising franc in New York is not surprising. There is no reason to assume that short time fluctuations reflect with any accuracy sober judgments of the future of French finance. Over a long period they may and doubtless do reflect such a judgment, and if we examine these New York rates year by year the downward trend is evident. Such movements, however, may be controlled as was done by pegging during the war, by the extension of private

credits like the one for \$100,000,000 arranged with J. P. Morgan and Company last March, or by public loans like the recent one in America. Funds thus secured may be used directly to support the market, or may have a definite psychological effect, even though not used.

While the exchanges may be thus affected even over extended periods, the process is clearly one that is not in itself a permanent solution. The foreign debt of France is increased by the loans, and at later dates francs must be used to buy dollars in larger amounts than ever as interest payments on the foreign loans fall due. Such measures may be justified as a temporary relief, and may for an indefinite period strengthen the market. During this breathing space domestic problems may be met and solved, and then the foreign obligations may be considered. Yet the foreign exchanges are not and cannot be completely divorced from the internal financial problem. Although the franc is strengthened abroad and M. Clementel may now give his attention to domestic finances, he does so with a realization that if he fails the exchanges will topple.

The basic difficulties are serious, centering first of all about the budget. Much well meant advice about balancing budgets is futile, because it overlooks the fact that so large a fraction of the expenditure is for debt charges. These constitute 16,548,000,000 francs, or 48 percent of the total expenditures for 1924. This part of the annual burden cannot be lessened except by outright default or repudiation, or by an arbitrary reduction in interest rates which would be disguised repudiation. When to this heavy and irreducible amount is added the pension charges which likewise are hard to alter, the field within which economies may actually be effected is seen to be very much reduced. With each new loan it is still further narrowed, and whenever payments are begun on the debts to the American and English governments the percentage of debt charges and other fixed items will be larger than ever.

There is another factor that adds to the difficulty. Prices are rising and continue to rise. This means higher direct costs to the government for all materials purchased. Also the employes of the government demand higher and higher pay with which to meet the increased cost of living. Reductions in expenditure are not easy.

Suggestions for meeting the situation are numerous, but many of them are directed at symptoms rather than at causes. Such is the proposal that the people of France be encouraged to use checks rather than bank notes, thus copying the English and American practice. It is argued that a serious cause for present concern is the difficulty in keeping the note issues of the Bank of France within the legal limit of 41 billion francs, which has almost been reached. An authorization to raise this legal limit would probably be interpreted as a sign that further and perhaps indefinite inflation cannot be avoided.

The substitution of checks in the circulation might remove this danger at least for a time, but it would not stop the rise in prices, which is one of the basic problems. If there be any relation between the volume of circulating medium and the price level, the use of one medium (checks) rather than another medium (bank notes) would not affect this level.

Only a little less futile is the proposed forced loan. It has been suggested by M. Clementel that limited companies shall in future be compelled to invest their "legal reserve funds" in French public funds. That this would stabilize rentes by stimulating the demand for them is the argument. Yet such a proposal is nothing more nor less than a forced loan. It would encourage concealment of profits and the exportation of capital on a tremendous scale.

To some the stabilization of the franc or even the deflation of the currency would bring relief. But let us see. At present business is active, for prices are rising—the usual effect. Government receipts, though inadequate, are large and increasing because prices rise. Each manufacturer or merchant sells his product for a large number of francs, and so can pay a generous number of francs into the Treasury as taxes. If the currency is deflated, which means a fall in prices, each Frenchman will receive fewer francs for his product, and so can pay fewer francs in taxes. But the larger part of the government's expenditures are fixed in amount, and any decline in the number of francs received means still more trouble. Moreover, this deflation or even a stabilization of the franc at its present level would probably precipitate a business crisis with an extended depression, which also means lessened tax receipts.

Some think that Premier Herriot considers a capital levy. If the French would quietly assent to such a levy it might bring relief, but such acquiescence is not to be expected. Elsewhere such rumors or even considerable increases in ordinary taxes have caused the flight of capital, and similar results may be expected in France. Critics of such unpatriotic evasions, whether by Germans, English or French, should not forget that even Americans are not averse to such practices, and should remember the admonitions of the McKenna Committee last spring that the only way to keep capital in Germany is to make conditions there attractive for it.

To some there is hope of large payments by Germany—but this is not the dream of those who have followed developments in Europe during the last six years. Europe is a land of anomalies. For a time defeated Germany was a land of prosperity, while victorious England suffered from depression. France, with her ravaged areas, has been a country of intense prosperity and no unemployment. A Dawes plan, ostensibly to devise a way of securing payments from Germany, may prove to be merely a way by which the German economic equilibrium is

restored, but with no important aid for France and the other Allies. There is no doubt that most unprejudiced critics are convinced that the French problems must be solved with but little aid from reparation payments.

Scylla and Charybdis loom on either hand. Debt charges and other irreducible items threaten the Treasury on the one side, and are month by month growing more menacing. On the other side are rising prices. While they bring some relief in the form of increased revenues from active business, they necessitate larger and larger outlays for running expenses, and cause larger and larger note issues by the Bank of France. Business demands more

and more as prices rise, while the government always finds loans at the bank a possible relief from its distress.

For the French predicament we can have nothing but sympathy, and for their struggle admiration. Criticism of the past is futile, and assistance in the present is becoming as vital as it was for Germany. Yet aid based only on emotion may be worse than none at all. Help from America, if intelligently given, will be preceded by an analysis of the real nature and extent of the French difficulty. As yet there is no reason to believe that a real solution is in sight.

ERNEST MINOR PATTERSON.

British Labor's Lesson

THE experiment of a minority Labor government in England has provided material for several lessons which the Labor party must learn if it is to achieve any part of its program. So far, the leaders have shown much less willingness to learn these lessons than the rank and file. This is not surprising, since the mistakes of leaders have to be recognized if they are not to be repeated.

The characteristic defect of the English is supposed to be hypocrisy, but I should say that it is snobbery. In Labor leaders this takes the form of a desire to be regarded by their opponents as "gentlemen." There are in British politics a number of "gentlemanly" traditions which have been gradually moulded into a form in which they are admirably adapted to safeguard the income of "gentlemen." America and the British Dominions are socially democratic in a sense which is not true of England. The First Division Civil Servants in England are "gentlemen"; i. e. they have been educated at public schools and at Oxford or Cambridge; many members of the late government were not "gentlemen" in this particular sense. Incredible as it may seem, this gave them an inferiority complex in dealing with their permanent officials, which was the main cause of their failure. In many departments this did not matter, as the civil servants are in the main an admirably public-spirited body; but there are exceptions.

Undoubtedly the worst of the government departments is the Foreign Office. In the rest of the Civil Service, the test for admission is purely intellectual, but in the Foreign Office a man must be recognized as well-born before he is allowed to compete. The result is, of course, that the intellectual and moral standard is lower than in other offices, and this initial disadvantage is increased by the nature of the work, much of which is such as will not bear the light of day. Inevitably, imperialism, secrecy and chicanery are among the traditions of the office. This ought to have made it obvious that the older officials could not be trusted to carry out

the policy of the Labor party. But by pleasant manners and apparent zeal they won the confidence of Mr. MacDonald. When they published the supposed Zinoviev letter and Mr. Gregory's reply without Mr. MacDonald's knowledge, he was persuaded that they were acting in what they believed to be the interests of his policy. He ought to have taken the view that, if this were so, any man who could make such a miscalculation was obviously too stupid to be entrusted with an important part in the affairs of the country. But it is part of the gentlemanly tradition of British politics that a minister must not blame his officials. The result was, in effect, that Mr. MacDonald let down his followers at the crucial moment in the general election. If he had repudiated the unauthorized action of the Foreign Office, the supposed Zinoviev letter would have had practically no effect; as it is, it lost the Labor party at least fifty seats.

Throughout the Labor government, Foreign Office officials were left almost unchecked in questions not regarded as of the first importance. The handling of Mexico was a bad instance. One of the first acts of the Labor government was to sanction a loan to the reactionary Hungarian government without demanding that they should carry out their pledge to restore democratic institutions—manhood suffrage, secret ballot, etc.—as a condition of British support. A bill drafted under the Conservatives was introduced to devote the residue of the British share of the Boxer indemnity to "purposes mutually beneficial to Great Britain and China." British interests hoped, under the bill, to obtain the money for the building of a railway. It was only after a long and difficult agitation that the government was induced to stipulate that the purposes should be "educational and cultural." The bill was lost by the dissolution, and now, presumably, the money will be used for the railway. Again, at the Washington conference Lord Balfour promised that Wei-hai-wei should be restored to China; this has not been done, and the Labor government was

as immovable on the subject as the Conservatives. Prolonged inquiry revealed a probability that the Foreign Office had misled Mr. MacDonald as to the facts of the case. It would be easy to multiply such instances.

England has always been proud of her Civil Service, and has been apt to boast of her superiority to America in this respect. But experience seems to show that, if the policy of the Labor party is ever to be carried through, it will be necessary to have some men who agree with that policy working in the government departments, having access to all information and preparing briefs for ministers. Ministers have not the time to look up facts for themselves, and ought not to depend wholly upon men who dislike their policy.

There is a further difficulty which must be faced by a democratic party in a snobbish community. A minister, by the fact of his position, profits by social

inequality. He sees the King, he dines with rich men, he is exposed in a thousand ways to suggestion of a reactionary sort. Unless he is a man of very unusual strength of character, this makes him forget the poorer sections of the population, by whose votes he has climbed to power. Those who are at the top can hardly be expected to make very vigorous efforts to abolish or diminish social inequality. It is difficult to see how to deal with this problem except by diminishing the autonomy of leaders; but a party which has to fight must leave a good deal of initiative to its generals. The only solution seems to lie in the growth of a critical spirit towards leaders, making them feel that any betrayal of the cause is likely to lead to their downfall. Enthusiasm should be directed to causes, not to persons. But human nature is prone to hero-worship, and the worship destroys the hero.

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

American Interiors

THE American wing of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, was opened just a little while ago: and it is superb, for the designers have taken the scattered objets d'art that used to range themselves on either side of long, dreary halls and restored them to something like their original setting. Here one no longer sees separate paintings, glass bottles, mirrors, bedsteads and what not united only by a card bearing the name of their donor. With infinite pains and exquisite understanding the Museum has restored, or freshly put together, whole rooms in such a way as to recreate the atmosphere of the seventeenth and eighteenth century American interior. It is not merely an exhibition of art; it is a pageant of American history, and so far as my acquaintance stretches nothing so complete and so tactful has ever been accomplished before by an American museum.

And yet and yet! One's enthusiasm for this achievement is tainted by the feeling that the lessons people will take away from these rooms are not precisely the lessons one would wish them to have learned. Where could I buy something like *this*? How could I copy *that*? These questions trip a little too easily from the lips of the visitors, and they show that for most of these people art is something that is done for, something that once existed and can now only be copied and reproduced or, by a fine piece of acquisitive bounce, "picked up." Frankly, the prospect fills me with foreboding; for the Colonial fashion has not merely been in full swing this last thirty years, but already among the swanky decorators it is being succeeded by the mid-Victorian fashion, with its ugly walnut contortions, its antimacassars, and its wax flowers, and there is no indecency which may not be restored once it becomes The Thing.

What is to keep us from harnessing machine-production to a sickly desire to counterfeit the past? I know of no other purge or preventive than understanding. So let us wander through these rooms and find out for ourselves what there is in American tradition that we can build upon; what there is which genuinely unites us with our past and promises a legitimate offspring in fresh art. How can we turn this spinsterly desire for ancestors into a virile effort to beget a new issue?

Let us begin with the rooms of the seventeenth century; and first, the massive beams of the old Church at Hingham, which forms the central hall of the top story, a relic of the days when oak was seasoned like iron, and used with similar rigor. The Capen House at Topsfield and the Hart House at Ipswich are both represented here, and their rooms bear the same simple elements as the church; the red-and-white chequered molding above the fireplace only accentuates the fine severity of the unpainted panels. There is nothing in these rooms that does not bear the marks of use; the forms are not merely good but, as Dr. John Dewey would say, they are good for something! And except for the great fireplaces there is nothing in these medieval rooms that visibly "dates." Were our forests not gutted out and were wood therefore not so infernally expensive, we might enjoy these panelled interiors again today; they are a hundred times better than the paperoid substitutes we are now pretty generally forced to employ. Even the small leaded windows are not as remote from our needs as we might imagine; most of our living rooms today suffer from an excess of light and this must be remedied by curtains that reduce the actual window opening to the area our ancestors provided at the beginning in the medieval house. In fact,

skilful architects today reserve large window openings for sun-parlors and sleeping-porches, knowing that for the rest of the house the small window better keeps out the summer sun and the winter frost. Our original American precedent is excellent!

What shall we say of the postered bed, with or without the canopy and curtain? An emphatic no, for this is a relic of primitive housing conditions, when the servants and the children slept on pallets in or near the master's chamber, and the curtains are the first step in that desire for privacy which makes even the legally wedded and bedded demand separate bedrooms, if they can afford it. Let us leave the four-poster in the depths of the seventeenth century. The chests and the dressers, on the other hand, are usually good. The carving is in low relief, as it should be in oak, and the designs are conventional, and since woodcarving is an amusing art it would be well to have more of it. But Grand Rapids, with all its ingenuity, will not help us here, and unless we can do our own carving we had best be content with the unbroken surface.

Some of the seventeenth century chairs, and the smaller gateleg tables, will serve us excellently again, but I must add a warning. The gateleg table, like the table-settle, was a product of the crowded housing conditions of the seventeenth century cottage, which first contained two, or at most four rooms. Both these models are useful today because in spite of our boasted wealth the majority of us cannot afford as much housing space as a Puritan farmer; and so these early forms, like the Windsor arm-chair-desk and the modern daybed, meet a present need for compactness and economy of labor.

We must discriminate, however, between the essential form and the incidental decoration, particularly the wood-turning. Lathes were becoming common in the seventeenth century, and too much of its wood-turning is spoiled by the finger-exercises, so to speak, of the craftsman. Instead of using the lathe to carry the lines of the chair or table through its supports, he too often, alas, turned meretricious beads, v's, u's, and what not; and the tradition is so firmly established that we can scarcely think of turned wood without these bulges and depressions. What we need nowadays is a woodturner who can use his chisel as tactfully as the sculptor Brancusi, who, with a slight taper or a subtle indentation, will bring out the latent beauty of the form and the material. The use of beading or of turned wood split in two for external decoration, which one finds on some seventeenth century furniture, is atrocious taste, and it would be sad to see it come back again with the august stamp of tradition.

I am tempted to linger in these rooms of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, because they seem to me to represent all that is serviceable in the American tradition, and because the forms rose out of conditions in some ways so curiously similar—but for what different reasons!—to those of our own time. Their austere quali-

ties are similar to those we find today in machinery: their beauty is the beauty of nice proportion, sound workmanship, keen design, and one finds more of this spirit in a little modernist German book, by Bruno Taut, on *Die Neue Wohnung* than one does in the pseudo-colonial houses that are being built up and down our land.

With the latter part of the eighteenth century "good taste" supplants decent necessity; and good taste means the elegance of ormolu mantels after Louis XV, the classic touches in moldings and cornices and chair-rails copied from the revivalists of Europe, and the conspicuous waste—always edging into vulgarity—which marked the social elevation of the planter and the merchant. Two floors out of three in the Metropolitan are given up to the period between 1750 and 1825, but it would be a pity if the influence over present day taste were exercised in anything like the same proportion. This period is the last seed of the real Renaissance; after this the impulse that turned men towards the classic past shrivels and decays. The artisanship of the time is perfect of its kind, the carving is meticulous, the inlaid cabinet work is sound and delicate, and some of the accessories, like table silver, are treated with great understanding. But there is nothing to build upon, the later eighteenth century carpenters do not suggest to us how we may be intelligently modern, whereas the seventeenth century artisans do. An exhibition of historical art is justified when it gives us the courage to make our own history. I do not think that the work of the Georgian and Federal periods provides this high and stimulating example. It is rather meant for imaginative ones who feel toward the furniture of 1789 the way that a member of the National Security League feels towards the Constitution. Heaven save us from D. A. R. æsthetics!

We are at a critical period in the development of American interiors. The level of taste, I think, is much higher today than it has been at any time since the Federal Period; on the other hand, this taste is in danger of being warped by a sentimentalism which attempts to glose the effect of dingy tenement blocks and more or less necessary mechanical contrivances by breaking out in electrolier shades of georgette and lace, in brass andirons within five feet of the all-too-efficient radiator, and in obscene bric-a-brac. Unfortunately, the forms which are produced automatically by the machine are either afflicted with this sentimentality, or are still brutal and untamed: they are not merely made *by* machines but made as if they were *for* machines. To go forward, we must draw back again to fundamentals; and there is no better starting point for the necessarily rigorous art of our own today than the equally spartan art that was produced by the woodturner, the carpenter, the blacksmith, and—yes—the housewife in the seventeenth century. There or nowhere is our America.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Unedited Opinions

III. Religion in America

HAVE you had an opportunity of considering the state of religion in America?

It has been my chief concern. And I have arrived, I think, at some definite conclusions.

May I hear them?

All that depends. In the first place, do you really wish to hear them (I don't, of course, mean you in particular)? And in the second place, can you hear them?

Well, try me.

I feel disposed to say as Paul said to the Athenians: in all matters of religion you are too superstitious; but with this addition, that your superstitions are reducible to a single root with many branches.

What is that root?

It is the unquestioned conviction that humanitarianism is goodness and that goodness is not merely next to godliness but is itself the essence of religion. In other words, you are in danger of substituting the worship of man on earth for the worship of God in heaven. Your highest values tend to become human instead of divine.

May this not be a matter of terminology simply?

That you should think it possible is almost proof of my point. You scarcely see any difference between God and my neighbor. Neighborliness and godliness are almost interchangeable terms. But, in fact, they are very different, and though each is necessary, neither taken by itself is religion. What I am saying is that you tend to take neighborliness as the whole of religion, to the exclusion of the other essential element.

But how, practically, do you distinguish them, and what is the evidence that we do not?

I should say that what differentiates religion from neighborliness, or godliness from humanitarianism, is a certain precise and positive element manifesting as an entirely different object of effort and, consequently, as an entirely different standard of value. In the one case, neighborliness is taken as itself the superior value and, hence the ultimate object: in the other, neighborliness is not set below godliness, but both together are subordinated as means to the special end of religion.

Which is?

Can you doubt it—the divinization of man.

I'm afraid the phrase means nothing very precise and positive to me.

Well, let me try to be precise, even if we cannot be positive. By the divinization of man I mean precisely what it appears to me all religions have as their essential aim—the development in man of relatively divine qualities and, particularly, of a relatively transcendent and divine state of conscious-

ness. The assumptions, implicit and explicit, of all religions are, first, that our present normal state of consciousness is not enough, however developed, to satisfy the demands of the perfect life; and, second, that there are special means or, if you will, exercises and modes of living, comprehended as religion, designed to enable man to attain a higher state of consciousness in this life. The distinction, in short, between neighborliness and religion is that neighborliness aims at the best use of our present mode of consciousness whereas religion aims at transcending and surpassing it. One aims at reformation, the other at transformation; one at humanity, the other at divinity.

But is this distinction really of practical value? Does it make any difference to the result whether we aim at reformation or transformation?

That is exactly what I regard as your radical superstition, the uncritical faith that, somehow or other, goodness will lead to godliness, humanity to divinity, reformation to transformation. And you hold this faith because it is easy and pleasant. To question it might raise too many embarrassing problems and, perchance, obligations. For example, suppose it to be true that religion requires not only the reformation, but the transformation of man, at once we are forced to inquire what, if any, are man's unrealized possibilities, whether we sincerely wish to realize them, whether or not we can even if we wish, and what, if any, are the means. So long as we take religion as included in neighborliness, all these problems and their possibly practical consequences can be shelved; but the moment neighborliness is questioned as a sufficient end or means, we are disagreeably obliged to think of them and to consider seriously where we are bound for. As it is, religion is regarded as the ultimate and inevitable fruit of neighborliness, growing naturally, so to say, on the same tree. But what if it is the fruit of another tree altogether? What if the divinization of man is not necessarily included in his humanization, but demands a technique of its own in which, perhaps, neighborliness is only one factor? You see the difference?

Clearly; but this makes religion more highly speculative than ever. About neighborliness the whole world is a competent judge. We know when a man is a good citizen and when not. There is a positive aim and a clear standard. But in your idea of religion, nothing appears to be certain. It is not certain that man has the possibility of a higher state of consciousness; we are not sure we wish it; we do not know whether we can attain it; we are ignorant of the means; and there are no competent teachers or

judges or standards of judgment. Religion, in this sense, seems to compare with neighborliness as the shadow with the substance.

So it seems, undoubtedly. And, in effect, what you do is to act on that assumption, with the consequence that you are practically non-religious at the same time that you faintly trust that your practical neighborliness may include religion. From my point of view, it would be more intellectually honest to declare religion to be a chimera of the imagination and to stick to your other chimera of neighborliness without great expectations.

Why do you call neighborliness another chimera?

Because though it appears to be substantial it is in reality quite as speculative as religion. In fact, we do not know what neighborliness is, whether we are truly capable of it, whether we wish it or what are the means. Nor is the world a competent judge. We assume too readily that what everybody thinks good is good: that, in short, our native likes and dislikes are reliable guides. But this is in passing. I am not proposing at this moment a critique of American neighborliness, but an examination of the state of religion in America. And my conclusion is that taking religion, as it always has been and must be taken, as embodying the aim of the divinization of human consciousness, America appears to me either to have forgotten it, or to assume that it will prove to be included, without special effort or attention, in mere neighborliness.

You will find it difficult, I think, to adduce the evidence for your conclusion in face of the well-known, not to say, notorious, curiosity of America in regard to cults promising new states of consciousness. Nothing is easier than to erect amongst us new altars inscribed to new unknown gods.

These are the branches, but the root is the same; namely, the faith that the improvement of man, measured in terms of happiness, health, prosperity and well-being, produces religion consequentially. All the religions, on the other hand, have declared that religion must come first, and the rest will follow. You put the cart before the horse. For instance, I have examined your popular cults, including Christian Science and Psycho-analysis, as well as some of the numerous obscure cults which profess to combine physical exercises for health with other exercises and practices for spiritual development. Their declared aim may or may not be the attainment of a higher state of consciousness, but their real aim, as proved by the criterion applied to the results, is the immediate attainment of a superior degree of health or happiness or prosperity. Should the pursuit of the religious aim of "divine" consciousness result, even temporarily, in impaired health of mind, body or estate, the method is condemned, proving, in brief, that all along the object was betterment of the existing state rather than its complete transformation at all risks.

But you would not say, would you, that the pursuit of the religious aim of higher consciousness is

necessarily incompatible with good health and all the other goods?

Certainly not necessarily. It may be possible to reach the South Pole without a moment of discomfort. Great things are theoretically possible *de luxe*. But if comfort and the common notions of well-being are to be the governing conditions, the chances that we shall adventure far are very small. And religion, in the true sense, is the most dangerous as well as the greatest adventure of all. Everything the world values must be risked; not, perhaps, lost, but risked. No risk no gain. Once again, it appears to me that you are not prepared to risk very much upon religion; or, at least for more than a short period. The returns must be quick or they must take the familiar form. Meanwhile the working substitute for religion in America has attained a high degree. There is no nation approaching it in the spirit and practice of neighborliness, individually and collectively. And there is no nation in which comfort is more scientifically pursued and generally disseminated. Your working hypothesis certainly works.

Could not most of all this be said of European nations? Has any Western nation pursued religion in your sense of the word? I do not see any zest on the part of your Europeans.

Nor do I; but the tradition lingers like the warm ashes of an old fire. An individual can still catch a flame from it. But I agree; Europe is rapidly losing what America has never had. The only question is whether America can snatch the torch before it is cold.

A. R. ORAGE.

Words

Tossing old capes across old shoulders,
Sniffing the market's hardier herbs,
Men of Verona loiter and gossip,
Laugh and curse on the plaza's kerbs.

Tucking furred chins into furred collars,
Stamping through grey frost-whetted air,
Men as hoarse as the crows in the Kremlin
Grumble and shrug through the snowy square.

Hearing the bells ring in the evening
Wind, on the temples of Thibet,
Tired men chew on tales like spices,
That wipe out grief as they wipe off sweat.

Dusk comes down over roofs and towers,
Lights leap up in city and tent,
Men lay words to their hearts for comfort.
Story and prayer and argument.

Troubling the night along the beaches,
At the smoking board, in the trampled bed,
With perishing breath they save the living,
And clothe with immortal words the dead.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

The Most Important Book

THE most important book in the world is that many-volumed anthology which gave us all our first—and most of us our only—taste of literature. The School Reader ranks even the Bible and Shakespeare. For it includes selections from both; and it is learned practically by heart, with profound conviction, at their most impressionable age, by millions who never again read anything but newspapers.

The compiler of such a book is a sort of literary Jesuit. Give him the moulding of a child's mind for the first six years, and he cares not who his successors may be. His work can never be undone. The best start that literature can have in its race for immortality—or at least for life—is admittance to the School Reader.

Consider poetry, for example. The Reader bards remain the sole bards of the masses. And even with the cultivated they win an unwarranted initial advantage. The Longfellows of literature, people divinely ordained for school books, can easily rout from the field of popular favor, with no other weapons than their foot-rules, non-juvenile singers, like Browning, of thrice their calibre. One Ella Wheeler Wilcox can repulse squadrons of Edwin Arlington Robinsons. Their strength is as the strength of ten because of the most important book in the world.

Not that the souls of babes are always transfused with enthusiasm for the school book versifiers. But when, in maturity, their poems come back to mind, gilding the very substantial pleasure of recognition with the glamour that now envelops far-off childhood, and adding perhaps the sentiment of dear and even sacred associations, they gain an advantage with us, specious perhaps, but more powerful than almost any other—more powerful often than that of extraordinary merit itself.

In the appreciation of poetry, as of all the arts, there are few mightier forces than the pleasure of recognition. It lends value to such devices as refrain, alliteration and rhyme. Working on another plane, it glours the recollected past. How often, moreover, the ether cone of glamour having been applied to the nose of criticism, do we appreciate that poem, not only at its full value, but at a little more? We forget to allow for the artificial radiance shed upon it by circumstance. The scenes etched upon our youthful minds by the Reader can easily win a lifelong advantage over reality itself. What current of dirty water creeping sluggishly under bridges infested by Italian beggars, may ever become for us so convincingly "Tiber, Father Tiber" as the fantastic crystal torrent wherein the eyes of our young fancy beheld the brave Horatius plunge, under the maledictions of false Sextus, and the encouragement of that excellent sportsman, Lars Porsena?

Impelled by such considerations, and by a real

curiosity to learn who were the literary Mellins and Nestlés of my infancy, I advertised in the Publishers' Weekly for a complete set of the Readers used in the schools of Cleveland during my early youth. They proved to be Appleton's, reinforced by Sheldon's Fifth.

The first thrill of recognition came from the blank leaves, front and back, which, in the aimless way of a child with a fly-leaf, had been scribbled up by hands unknown. True to the instinct of youth, their owners' names, printed by liberally moistened pencils, sprawled in block letters along the closed edges of the leaves. And the fatter volumes were extra-illustrated with exactly the same iris-colored transfer pictures of beasts, men and gods with which I once beautified my own books.

In the slender First Reader I found nothing familiar but the inevitable opening illustration of C-A-T, and the neatly moral tale of The Little Red Hen, who so early inculcated the advantages of that national initiative and zealous attention to business which has been characterized by Louise Imogen Guiney as *Hustlerium Tremens sive Americanitis*.

I recognized little in the next two volumes. They were filled with anonymous pap, mechanically turned out by horny-minded sons of literary toil, and calculated to insult the intelligence of any self-respecting eight-year-old. But the Fourth began with that memorable thing of Benjamin Franklin's about paying too dear for your whistle; and Mary Howitt's *The Spider and the Fly*.

They greeted me after all the years like steadfast friends. Here were real stories about worthwhile people like Gulliver and Grace Darling, Robinson Crusoe and Paul Revere.

And voilà, the first bit of verse I ever learned by heart: "The stag at eve had drunk his fill."

Soon memory seems to have attained its second wind and to have "committed" almost every poem it met. Here were the "mournful numbers" and the "barefoot boy" and the "spreading chestnut tree" for whose exclusive appreciation, as Mr. Carl Van Doren explains, youth is so fatally prepared by the protozoic metrical scheme of Mother Goose.

It is cheering to find that the more artificial poems are not so well remembered, as where Bryant elegantly talks of "the too potent fervors" when he means the heat, and states that under its influence the clover "declines its blooms."

But, turning to *The Mariner's Dream* by Dimond, my pride bites the dust. For I recognize precisely its worst lines:

Ah, what is that sound which now 'larms on his ear?
'Tis the crashing of thunders, the groan of the sphere!
In vain the lost wretch calls on mercy to save;
And the Death Angel flaps his broad wings o'er the wave.

In those serious days of youth I could see nothing either funny or unpoetic about a sphere groaning or an angel flapping.

The worst of it was, our teachers said this sort of thing was good poetry. And doubtless the vast majority of us still consider it so. I think that a certain bit of astronomic doggerel out of the Third Reader once struck me with a more profound and pleasurable conviction than its adult version by Kipling does today. The new moon was to be used as a cradle:

We'd call to the stars to keep out of the way,
Lest we should rock over their toes;
And there we would stay till the dawn of the day,
And see where the pretty moon goes.

At eight this was as attractive as, ten years later, I found the proposal to inhabit a "separate star" and "a golden chair," and "splash at a seven-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair."

Indeed, so strong is the persistent sorcery of childish impression, that at times one must consciously exert the muscles of maturity in order not to put the little red hen in the same proud coop with Chanticleer.

Here and there in the Reader gleams a specimen of the very bathos that used to compose the Sunday School libraries of our childhood. This is a gem from J. G. Holland:

And when they came to bury little Charley,
They found fresh dewdrops sprinkled in his hair,
And on his breast, a rosebud gathered early,
And guessed, but did not know, who placed it there.

In the department of humor, as well, we were wronged with slap-stick stuff like Confessions of a Bashful Man. He treads on his host's gouty toe, sheds ink on the carpet, and wipes it up with his handkerchief. At dinner, having knocked over everything within reach, he burns his mouth with pudding, inflames it with brandy and absent-mindedly mops his streaming face with his inky handkerchief. Exit amid howls of laughter.

Not that the Reader was wholly devoid of true humor. For example, it inoculated one of my comrades so thoroughly with selections from Alice in Wonderland that the habit of quoting her on all occasions has persisted. To this day he is sometimes accused of speaking with Alice aforethought.

These battered volumes recall an emotion long forgotten: the rapture of getting a new Reader. With what disgusted relief its too familiar predecessor was flung aside! With what greedy gusto was the new book gobbled up from frontispiece to appendix! Then, after about three weeks of gobbling, the despair with which we recognized that the new volume's resources were now exhausted as well, and that we faced another year of nauseatingly familiar diet. The most repulsive were stories like The Bursting of Ouseley Dam and The Prairie on Fire, after their full-puffed tire of suspense had been punctured and flattened by the tacks of repetition. The monotony was maddening. We wretched

youngsters were prisoners behind bookish bars, condemned for mental exercise to count the cracks in the cell walls.

After the first three weeks the illustrations were even more repellant than the text. The picture people of those days had dead white paper faces, monstrous eyes and silly, microscopic mouths. They were the real melodrama of illustration, the sort of art you find surviving on the news stands of today in the naïve ladies of The Police Gazette. Such art was not calculated to furnish pleasure, even to children, for five days a week, world without end.

Surely my misunderstanding of a little fun by John Godfrey Saxe entitled Ho-Ho of the Golden Belt was responsible for an early conviction (which died all too late) that China was a wholly farcical place. I believe this poem was the first and only thing I read about the land of Confucius while in grammar school. I was thereby convinced that all its people had gashes for eyes, noses of only two dimensions, club feet, nails "like an eagle's claws," pigtailed that swept the ground, and trick names like "Great Hang-yu and You-be-Hung." I felt sure that all Chinese ladies smoked pipes and devoured their pet poodles for lunch, and that every Chinese gentleman murdered his numerous wives in rotation, for which offence

His thirteen brothers were merely hung,
And his slaves bamboosed in the mildest way
For a calendar month, three times a day.

One wonders whether such misconceptions as these have not been fostered by the textbook of other nations as well. Are Chinese infants, for example, ever filled with equally fantastic notions about us? It would be poetic justice if some Saxe of the far East were allowed to bias tender Mongolian minds by putting into their Readers, as the sole information about America, some such doggerel as this:

Yankee Doodle of Main Street, Kans.,
Is the flower of American gentlemen.
He muddles his mats with leather-shod toes,
He pockets the fabrics that cleanse his nose.
Though the word of a female can cause him to quake,
He roasts his fathers-in-law at the stake;
And for this he is made a congressmun
To rule the realm of the Setting Sun.

Of course, the School Reader of this our wiser day is vastly superior. Bathos and sentimentality have flown. Nothing more is heard of the flapping of death-angels, or dew-drops on little Charley's hair. The slap-stick has ceased from slapping. Foreign lands are not solely represented by nonsense verses, and some of our best artists furnish the excellently reproduced illustrations. Supplementary reading has scotched the snake of monotony. No longer is this the worst hated of all books.

But even so, it is not good enough. To live up to

its unparalleled opportunities it should be the best compiled book in the world. No expenditure of brains and time and treasure would be disproportionate to secure this result. We might set some such machinery in motion as Mr. H. G. Wells advocates for the making of his proposed Bible of Civilization. It would merely mean an editorial board of two or three hundred of the most brilliant living minds, backed by a fund of thirty or forty million dollars for salaries, printing and propaganda. Bearing in mind the Wellsian warning that the fate of civilization now hangs on the issue of a race between education and catastrophe, we might see whether the most important book in the world could not be made the best book in the world.

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER.

A COMMUNICATION

Child Labor and Liberty

SIR: Will you allow me to express my keen interest in the editorial in your issue of December 3, entitled *Child Labor, the Home and Liberty*, in which you do me the honor of referring to a letter of mine in the *New York Times* of November 18? The matter, according to your editorial, is quite simple: the proposed Twentieth Amendment does not confer any more power upon Congress than state legislatures now possesses; the question, therefore, is a question not of principle but of practice and "the economics of the issue" needs only to be brought to the front in order to refute the "fat business men and windy professors" who now prate about the sacredness of the home.

Thank you for making the whole thing so perfectly plain. Even a windy professor can appreciate the succinctness and lucidity with which you write. The only trouble with your very perspicuous exposition, I am constrained to think, is that it is not true.

"Does any parent in the United States," you ask, "now enjoy discretion beyond the possibility of legislative invasion in disposing of his children's time and labor that it is assured the Child Labor Amendment would destroy?" You answer "No." But the right answer is "Yes." The parents of the United States are now protected from legislative interference by the great "bill-of-rights" provisions in the Constitution of the United States, on the basis of which the Supreme Court invalidated, for example, the Nebraska language law which made literary education a crime. But this new amendment is to form part of the very instrument which contains that bill of rights. Its passage therefore could be held to interpret authoritatively (or set aside to the extent necessary to give effect to its provisions) those previous amendments. No state legislature, for example, now has a right under the Constitution of the United States to prohibit all labor of all persons up to eighteen years of age. Congress, on the other hand, under the distinct provisions of the new amendment would have such a right.

It has been maintained, indeed, by advocates of the amendment that the courts would never interpret it to mean what it says. We regard such an assurance as exceedingly precarious; and even if it were not so precarious, we

have grave misgivings about the notion which it involves as to the function of a court.

But even if we should prove to be wrong at this point, even if it were true that the proposed amendment merely confers upon Congress powers already possessed by the state legislatures, would the question of that transfer of power be, as you represent it, a mere question of detail to be decided by "economic" considerations of efficiency? We think not. Will you permit me to observe that at this point your conception of American institutions differs fundamentally from ours. We hold that the local autonomy of the states, far from being a mere matter of expediency, is at the very foundation of our American freedom. But under the proposed amendment that local autonomy would practically be destroyed. By far the most important half of life would be placed under the control of a centralized bureaucracy . . .

But from one point of view your insistence upon the "economics" of the issue is justified. The approval of the amendment would indeed be economically a very great benefit to one class in the population—namely to the vast army of federal agents and inspectors which any exercise of the powers conferred by the amendment would require. The federal agents would be economically benefited; but American liberty and the sanctity of the American home would be gone.

Finally, may I call attention to a slight inaccuracy in your reference to my letter in *The Times*. You make my letter refer to a vindication of the sacredness of the home which would be accomplished if the amendment were finally rejected by the states. But what I actually referred to was the vindication which has already been given by the enormous adverse vote in Massachusetts (696,119 to 247,221). There are hardly 696,000 "windy professors" even in a state like Massachusetts, where the proportion of professors to the rest of the population is notoriously high. It is quite possible, on the contrary, that the American people is at last making its voice heard. If so, legislatures may well take heed. The voice of the people, when it is heard with the decisiveness of that Massachusetts vote, is rather a majestic thing.

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

Princeton, N. J.

Whether or not a State law prohibiting all labor of all children under 18 would be held unconstitutional as conflicting with the implications of the "Bill of Rights" has never been determined, nor it is likely ever to be determined, by the courts. In practice, however, the states have proceeded freely to regulate, limit or prohibit child labor in such form as the legislature deems undesirable, exactly as Congress would do under the proposed amendment. The state thus invades the "sanctity of the home" in the same sense that Congress might invade it. To be logical Professor Machen and men of his way of thinking ought to agitate for an amendment prohibiting state regulation of child labor. They ought to go further and seek to destroy other powers by which the state steps between parent and child, as in compulsory education, compulsory vaccination, restrictions upon child beating, etc. Either children are the parents' private affair, or they are also the public affair of state and nation. If the latter position is accepted, it becomes, not a question of liberty versus government, but one of state versus nation, essentially a question of expediency which cannot be answered in one way in all times and conditions.—THE EDITORS.

The Power of the Word

IN his volume of Impressions and Comments, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Havelock Ellis discusses briefly the philosophy of obscenity and its place in life and art. He notes that in England, and most of all in America, it is difficult to be rightly obscene and "easy to be coarse and vulgar," chiefly because "the particular twist of our culture has impeded the manifestation of obscenity," and when the impulse has burst its bonds, has given it an artificial emphasis which in turn sets up "a natural reaction of disgust."

Mr. Ellis would have found corroborative evidence for these observations on the New York stage of the present season. The manifestation of obscenity which has suffered longest and most complete abeyance in Anglo-Saxon communities is a matter of words. Probably no circumstance of theme or plot, setting or acting, in any of the hundred odd plays presented in 1924 in New York, has aroused discussion equal to that caused by the appearance of three or four of the expressions—there are perhaps not more than a dozen altogether—which are supposed to be tabu in polite intercourse. What *Price Glory* was the first offender. Its freedom in reporting the speech of soldiers included three phrases since withdrawn with the explanation on the program that they are in use in the best families and by our noblest statesmen—which we can readily believe. It is worthy of note that the censorship directed against this play by the Secretary of the Navy was concerned with these words only. Apparently he did not fear the weakening of the people's will to war from a representation of that function far more disillusioning than in *Arms and the Man*, while he recognized the danger to his appropriations should the public become aware that the Marines habitually invoked the name of Jesus Christ in conversation, or alluded to comrades in terms denoting illegitimate or canine birth.

The emotion excited by these crude popular forms of speech is due to the long inhibition to which Mr. Ellis refers. On the stage that inhibition is a part of the history of the English drama. In 1697 the Rev. Jeremy Collier published his *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*, directed against the license of the dramatists of the Restoration, especially Dryden and Congreve. His protest was largely animated by the habitual representation of adultery and disrespect of clergy by these playwrights, but he took ample account of verbal outrages. "What is more frequent," he exclaims, "than their Wishes of Hell and Confusion, Devils and Diseases, all the Plagues of this World upon all Occasions by Heroes and Poltroons; by Gentlemen and Clowns; Love and Quarrels; Success and Disappointment; Temper and Passions must be varnished and set off with Oaths." He cites from Dryden's *Love Triumphant* the speech of Carlos: "Nature has given me my Portion in Sense with a P— to her," and adds, like a modern censor, "The reader may see the Hellish syllable at length, if he pleases." He objects that in *The Double Dealer* "Lady Plyant cries out Jesu and talks smut in the same sentence." When Cynthia in the same play says: "I am thinking that though Marriage makes Man and Wife one Flesh it leaves them two Fools," he gravely warns us "This Jest is made upon a Text in Genesis and afterwards applied by our Saviour to the Case of Divorce." One of his animadversions falls upon Lady Plyant's remark that "Jehu was a hackney coachman." One cannot help sympathizing with Congreve, who remained the

impenitent thief, in his innocent query why a hackney coachman might not be named Jehu as well as Jeremy. That most of the verbal sins to which Collier took exception are little or nothing in our lives may be gathered from a visit to the excellent revival of the *Way of the World* at the Cherry Lane Theatre, but the contemporary significance of his book remains one of the most interesting phenomena in the history of English morals. Whether it was the cause of the change or rather a sign that the change had already taken place in public taste, it is noteworthy that the theatre very shortly after reformed itself, and became one of the agencies, like the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, for promoting the sense of respectability and smugness which was a literary hallmark of the eighteenth century. Whatever the realities of life the representation of them on the stage was henceforth to shun grossness and vulgarity, not to say profaneness and obscenity of speech. It became the high tradition of English actors never to pronounce the sacred name of God before the footlights.

In the movement at the close of the nineteenth century to bring the English theatre abreast of the realities of life, it was speech which proved the most recalcitrant element. The dictum that the actor should abstain from words not tolerated in ordinary social intercourse has hardened into a tradition which tends to keep stage language behind that of actual usage as invoked by the management of *What Price Glory*. Obviously the stage is catching up. Taste in speech is determined by morals; and as the stage follows the behavior of modern men and women it is useless to protest that it must not copy their speech. There are some words which will remain tabu on the stage because the actions which they describe remain so in the lives of theatre goers.

Undoubtedly it is to be urged that there is a diction proper to the stage as there is a diction proper to the pulpit. The use of words so much at variance with the traditions of the institution as to arouse violent emotion may prove hostile to the success of the piece as to that of the sermon. No serious playwright except Mr. Shaw would dare to open his play with the riot which automatically takes place when the word bloody is heard in the British playhouse. On this point it was a matter of common observation that *What Price Glory* had a rather close shave. The critic of *The New York Evening Post*, for instance, could not see the wood because of the uncouth shape of a few of the trees. Again, granting that the use of one or more disreputable expressions may shock a desultory public into attention and discussion it should be remembered that the number of such expressions in English is very small. It is manifestly a waste to use more than one on a single occasion. The authors of *What Price Glory* seem to have hogged more than their fair share of these limited resources; and on ethical grounds we approve the economy of Mr. Sidney Howard who used only one, and, following the example of Mr. Ziegfeld with his more extreme sensations, withdrew it after the first night. But on the whole perhaps we should applaud the energy and enterprise of our playwrights of 1924. The existence of this buried treasure in the English language was bound to be a cause of unrest and temptation, all the more since the pirates knew exactly where it was located. It was bound to be appropriated and exploited one day or other, and now that this has happened we may all be glad, especially as the recovery of the treasure trove falls out within almost two years of the double centenary of Jeremy Collier's death.

R. M. L.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Question of Accuracy

SIR: Since I am the "Inquirer" who commented upon the news item of the Associated Press about the "watchman of one of the numerous Paris normal schools" who won the Filene peace prize, allow me to say a word in reply to the spirited apology of the A. P. representative in your issue of December 15th.

If the Paris correspondent, as it is contended, was told by the award committee, in advance of any official announcement, that the winner was a "gardien" of one of the "normal schools" of Paris, then that committee was at fault for giving the A. P. loose, misleading and even grotesque information. But if the A. P. man translated "surveillant general" by watchman and took the "Ecole Normale Supérieure" to be just one of "the numerous normal schools" then he knows neither French nor France enough to qualify as a specialist on either subject. His translation would be like that of a French correspondent (and they make their share of blunders) who would speak of an administrative official at Harvard as a "watchman in one of the numerous American colleges."

Now I am willing to acknowledge that readers quietly sitting in their homes, are apt to be too intolerant of minor offenses of newspaper men who work under trying conditions of haste and with an excusable ignorance of some special institutions of a special nature. But I have such a high opinion of the personnel and the equipment of the A. P., such confidence also in its accuracy and impartiality that I naturally gasped at this accidental lapse, and perhaps displayed undue severity.

I would not, however, have wasted this space on such a minor incident if it did not illustrate a need that I have often felt in reading American papers, the need, both in the news agencies and in the newspapers, of native experts who would, at first sight, detect egregious blunders such as this one and also dispose once for all, of certain perennial and periodic "misprints" of which I shall gladly give a list to the A. P. or to any one else—for the asking.

OTHON GUERLAC.

Ithaca N. Y.

Pensions in Pennsylvania

SIR: Will you not allow us some space in your magazine to present to your readers in Pennsylvania, especially those residing in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, a few public facts to which they are entitled as citizens of the state, but which were not conveyed to them by their daily news channels?

Early in October, the Pennsylvania Old Age Assistance Commission issued a call for a conference on the subject of old age pensions. This was a result of the recent Dauphin County Court decision declaring Pennsylvania's pioneer Old Age Assistance act unconstitutional. The commission invited all persons and organizations interested in the subject to attend. Following the announcement, every Philadelphia paper carried an item that the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce would send two of its leading representatives to oppose this legislation because, they claimed, in addition to its being socialistic and paternalistic, the act, if carried into effect, would cost the state at least \$25,000,000 per year.

The conference was held on November 13th at the Capitol. Nearly 200 persons from practically every county in the state, representing approximately thirty different organizations, including representatives of almost all church denominations as well as representatives from five other states were in attendance. The meeting, it was generally admitted, set a high water mark in public gatherings. The advertised representatives of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce did not appear. The only representative of the State Chamber of Commerce present not only took no issue with any of the speakers, but later congratulated us upon "the inspiring meeting we had."

At this meeting some of the most startling public facts were disclosed. Governor Gifford Pinchot, who signed the Pennsylvania Old Age Assistance law, in a most enthusiastic address pointed out that the basic Pennsylvania poor law today "is identical in principle and almost identical in language with the Elizabethan poor law adopted in England in 1601." He declared that there are nearly 3,000 laws on our statute books dealing with poor relief and that "for nearly 100 years every commission appointed

to study the subject urged revision of our poor laws." "Philadelphia city," he added, "is managed by six different boards of poor directors, while one ward in that city is under the jurisdiction of four different poor boards."

The chairman, in summarizing the Commission's findings as disclosed from nearly 3,000 applications of aged persons in the state, showed that, based upon as accurate and scientific figures as are now ascertainable, the Commission is convinced that even if every person in Pennsylvania, qualified under the law, should be granted assistance, it would not cost the state more than about \$5,000,000 per year. With this sum the Commission would be able to take care of two and one-half times the number now taken care of in the Pennsylvania almshouses at an actual expenditure of at least \$8,000,000 per year. It was also shown that while the administrative expenses under the almshouse plan in Pennsylvania amount to over \$60 of every \$100 expended, the administrative expenses under the old age pension plan, according to present indications, would not exceed \$6 or \$7 of every \$100 expended.

A summary of the above facts was submitted four days in advance to all the representatives of the big Pennsylvania dailies as well as to all the press associations located in Harrisburg. We have the avowed assurance of the representative of the Associated Press at Harrisburg that the story was sent out by mail; and furthermore that at least 700 words were released by wire during the day of the conference. The Pittsburgh office of the Associated Press writes us that the report was received from their bureau at Harrisburg and was part of the regular state service and "undoubtedly reached all Associated Press papers in Pennsylvania at the time we received it and in time for publication as designated." The smaller papers in the state carried fair accounts of the conference as sent them by the various press associations. However, of the six dailies in Philadelphia, only two deemed the meeting of sufficient importance to notice it on the inside pages in stories of a little over 100 words each, while an examination of several editions fails to disclose even one of the five dailies in Pittsburgh which mentioned the conference either on the day of the meeting or the following morning.

We know your Pennsylvania readers will appreciate these facts. Should they desire a more extensive report of the information disclosed at the conference we shall be glad to send them copies of the address delivered.

JAMES H. MAURER,
A. EPSTEIN,

Old Age Assistance Commission.

Harrisburg, Penn.

Child Labor and Small Families

SIR: According to East, Mankind at the Crossroads, page 266, child labor laws decrease the size of families. When children are allowed to labor at an early age, and can thus contribute to the family income, families are large, so that the total family income may be large. When children are not allowed to labor, the cost of bringing to maturity is so great that families become smaller.

This seems to be an argument in favor of the Child Labor Amendment. Since the Census of 1890 announced the end of free land, there have been various indications that the United States is getting too full of people for comfort. The recent immigration bill is an example. If this is true, the limitation of families by this indirect method, a child labor law, will be desirable among other means for lessening the economic struggle in the United States.

STANLEY D. DODGE.

Chicago Ill.

Christmas, 1924

"Is there any room for us here in the stable?"
"No. Move on. You're good and able."

Another Joseph in the snow
And a Mary, asking where to go;
And now the place is crowded full
With painted wax and pasted wool.

WITTER BYNNER.

The Land of the Fathers

The Land of the Fathers, by Sergey Gussiev Orenburgsky. Translated by Nina Selivanova. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. \$2.50.

THERE are large cages belonging to 'The Land of the Fathers' against the bars of which the children hurl themselves with weeping and wailing. . . . But a new epoch has come. A spirit of flight has seized upon the children and they have fled from the cages in which they were confined by the customs of their fathers. . . . These words, in the early pages of the book, are not the only ones prophetic of what has happened since 1917 in Russia. Nor was Gussiev Orenburgsky by any means the only Russian writer who felt, in the early years of this century, that the foundation of the Empire was a bubbling quicksand of misery and revolt which would soon boil up to the surface and drown it forever, that the "immense retorts in which the labor and misfortunes of the slaves are distilled into the illusive well-being of the masters," would soon explode with a final and terrific crash. The uneasy, ill-repressed foreboding with which Russia quivered about twenty years ago was felt by nearly all, and expressed by many, but Russians remember *The Land of the Fathers* as the novel which, more than perhaps any other, gave a true picture of those seething years. It excited them, and roused a fury of discussion, because it seemed to answer the questions they most wanted to know, what is happening to us, and what is going to happen; because it described clearly the disease of their society, and foreshadowed, dimly, the crisis of the disease and a wild tremendous convalescence. They read it, probably, less as a novel than a social commentary. But now, after seven years of revolution, with everything upside down and the old order blown away like dust, it is interesting to us far more as a novel than a social document. Direct, flaming generalizations about misery and capital, the brief, abrupt intrusions of the author's own editorial comment seem incidental, and the illumination of a Russia on the eve of revolution appears rather as a by-product in a fascinating procession of scenes and characters, in the novel itself.

Some happy faculty most of the Russian writers seem to have had, of refraining from despotism over their material, of letting life in a measure subdue them and ride them at its own will. Often their own talents seem to be not of the first rank, save that one talent of letting life sweep them away, and the great thing that carries them away makes them greater than they really are. One of the curses that afflicts our novelists, an orderly, unremitting, anaemic mastery over their material, a laborious turning of great living waters into little channels of the printed page, the Russians apparently are free from. They do not know too well where they are going, and are rewarded by accidental riches, discoveries, surprises. The path of Gussiev Orenburgsky's plot does not move mercilessly ahead cutting a neat ribbon through life, it swirls along on the tide; here it is completely stopped by the entrance and exit of an original character, there it circles in an amusing backwater, now it sinks entirely, and comes to its end leaving us careless of the course it has run, interested chiefly in what we have seen by the way.

Not a little of what we have seen reminds us of our own country. Might it not have been some town in the middle west where "a grain elevator proudly lifts its head,"

where "back of the granaries suburbs have grown up, which are dark and dirty and which even at the outset wore a starving and desolate aspect, but which have increased the population of the city from fifteen to thirty thousand"; a little town where

. . . the newspaper did not lack for correspondents. The townspeople began to write and they wrote about everything—about "unpaved streets," about "stray dogs," about "the immense number of strangers seeking work who had rushed here from God knows where," about "the growing numbers of vagabonds." Side by side with this they also wrote about "the inactivity of the police," about "the progress of crimes against private property," . . . about "the opening of the factory of the Bros. Kandaurov in the presence of county authorities, at which a solemn prayer was offered by the priest, Father Iona Monastirsky, who afterwards said a few heart-felt words about the rights of employers and the duties of employes. . . ."

And then, in a few pages, we are plunged into the heart of an entirely different country, among people eccentric, alive, three-dimensioned, who could not be found here, or if they exist, could find hardly anyone to describe them. Gussiev Orenburgsky is, by comparison with other Russians, not of the first rank, but he possesses, along with them, that knack for characterization which seems to grow in the soil. The characters are often briefly, tellingly described, but, what is so much more difficult and valuable, they describe themselves. They speak, and their words have not a trace of their author's accent; he does not put into those mouths words which should belong there according to his notion of them, the words come out, of themselves, as if from some stranger with whom the author was unacquainted, as if overheard and not invented. One searches the book trying to put one's finger on the trick, which at times seems simply magical, but without avail: here is the author, and there is his character, and how the one became part of the other, what is the creative connection between the two, remains a mystery. There are far more striking, more memorable, more real characters in Russian fiction than any of Gussiev Orenburgsky's, but if anyone were to conjure up from the American scene characters as remarkable and real as his he would step to the head of the line. A few Americans have done as well, still fewer have done better; why aren't there more? Some explanation may be in the difference of material: perhaps we are more alike, and reveal our essential differences one from another, the complexes that make up character, less clearly in word and action. The Russians may after all be more individual, more obviously different, more given to self-characterization, richer in living caricatures. But this is not enough.

One feels that the Russian talent, Gussiev Orenburgsky's excellent second-rank talent for example, could unearth unsuspected characters among us, and make them extraordinarily real. By what method? By no method—perhaps that is part of the answer. A too-conscious method, a too-skilful technique in characterization often leaves the mark of the author's hand upon his human creation. Leave the characters alone. Allow them to speak for themselves. Don't take them apart and put them together again—otherwise they smack of the author. Plant them in the ground and let them grow of themselves. It sounds easy, but it is infinitely hard to achieve. And perhaps it is native, and can never be learned at all.

ROBERT LITTELL

Impressions and Comments

Impressions and Comments, by Havelock Ellis. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin Company. \$3.00.

THIS is the third and unhappily the last volume of this engaging series of note books—and, it may be confidently added, the best. Such personal records grow in richness as the soil which sustains them becomes deeper. Mr. Ellis is like a valley through which flows the stream of experience, physical, intellectual, æsthetic, which in its overflow leaves a constantly deepening alluvium. His well wishers, so discreetly quoted by his publishers, refer to him as “the most civilized Englishman living today,” and “the very flower of what civilization ought to be,” and rightly, for his later books are a sort of compendium of the resources of modern culture, the interests and pleasures which it provides. Havelock Ellis is an exponent of the good life as it is possible today. In *The Dance of Life* he imposes on his really vast reading of contemporary philosophy an inspiring if a bit fantastic scheme of the intellectual good life. In *Impressions and Comments* he records day by day the diverse matters which go to make up the natural good life of a wise man.

These experiences are of extraordinary variety. There is the joy of mere living, even in bodily weakness and pain, within sound of the sea in Cornwall, in the sunlight of the Midi, in the Pyrenees. Often the daily entries begin in such lilting fashion as “Every morning as I lie in bed on the hillside of this valley over the sea,” . . . or close with a full C major chord: “Then I fling myself down in the complete solitude of the hillside over the sea to bask full length in the sun.” At times the appeal of nature passes over into more exact appreciation of phenomena such as waves and spray, or wild flowers in June, or the songs of birds, especially the strophic ode of the thrush. The view of humanity in the mass is abhorrent enough to reason, but at Margate Mr. Ellis finds “this crowd of miscellaneous people who are occupied in raising mountains of sand, or playing at ball, or paddling in the dirty sea-water, or publicly cuddling their best girls, or reading the Daily Mail, or licking two penny ice-cones . . . a spectacle of unending exhilaration.” Individuals emerge from his pages: the girl seen on the train at Kenmare, “with the most dazzling eyes that I have ever seen anywhere in this world”; the old gentlemen met in the Tate Gallery who breathed the name Sir Joshua with veneration and took snuff with a fine gesture. “So many beautiful things happen to me,” murmurs Mr. Ellis. One of the most exciting was a flight to Paris, when the wind compelled a landing at Beauvais. He renews his delight in music at the Bach Choir Festival, a delight not dulled by a comparison of Bach and Beethoven, but so intense that the author came out from the hall feeling as though he were dancing along the pavements of Westminster. He has pleasure in the chateaux of the Loire; in sculpture from archaic Greek to Rodin; in painting and drawing, with special enthusiasm for the Victorians, Millais, Walker, Hunt, Whistler; in the long panorama of the world as unrolled by science; in great periods of human history—the seventeenth century in France as represented by Tallement des Reaux, or Elizabethan England as recalled in its drama revived at *The Phoenix*; in the dance, in poetry, in fiction, in the contemporary world of thought and action.

Havelock Ellis is catholic in all senses. Somewhere he

speaks with pity of those who have to empty themselves of one interest or satisfaction to make room for another. In the great Victorian conflict between intuition and reason, between heart and head, he is not neutral; he fights on both sides. He can enjoy both Flaubert and Proust. He recognizes that the supreme moments of life are those of mystical illumination, that an “intuitive revelation to æsthetic sensibility” transcends all criticism and is really of the nature of religious conversion, that “the Mystic is the æsthete of the Universe.” But this doctrine does not exclude the play of the mind about all phases of artistic effort, and his observations lead constantly into acute and enlightening criticism. He explains the superiority of *Wuthering Heights* to Miss Romer Wilson’s *Death of Society*. He corrects the religionists who canonize Dostoyevski by pointing out that “their saint could only rise to the divine from a human foundation that was perverse . . . Dostoyevski was the Saint of Sinners, and all his work . . . the Idealization of Perversity.” He attributes the superiority of Shelley to Keats as a poet of love to the fact that Keats “felt things less in their visual values than Shelley, more in their precise tactile values, and that constitutes the most difficult aspect of love to render in poetry.”

The completion of Mr. Ellis’s commentaries makes it natural to compare them with the notebooks of Samuel Butler. Both men are characteristic of the period, owing first allegiance to the scientific spirit but with absorbing interest in the finer processes of life as revealed in historic culture, in art, in music and literature, in personal experience. Both are critics with a realistic point of view which does not exclude manifestations which we call romantic. They start in their criticism of life from a common attitude in regard to the relations of the individual and society. To Butler “morality is the custom of one’s country and the current feeling of one’s peers.” From this it follows that “every discovery and, indeed, every change of any sort is immoral, as tending to unsettle men’s minds and hence their custom and hence their morals, which are the net residuum of their mores.” To Havelock Ellis “morality means the manners and customs, with the corresponding ways of feeling and thinking, of the majority of a community at any given time and place.” The extension of their thought leads both into utterances in regard to social behavior which have for conventional ears the note of paradox. Butler for example applies the Greek doctrine of moderation to virtue. “It is as immoral to be too good as to be too anything else. . . . Virtue is, as it were, the repose of sleep or death. Vice is the awakening to the knowledge of good and evil—without which there is no life worthy of the name.” Quite in accord with this Mr. Ellis, when meditating on the “philosophy of obscenity and its æsthetic place in life and in art,” finds that in England and most of all in America: “the natural play of the impulses has been checked; the particular twist of our culture has on one side impeded the manifestations of obscenity, and on the other side, when that impulse has burst its bonds, subjected it to our British tendency, to what Coleridge called *nimiety*, too-muchness, with the inevitable result that a natural reaction of moral propriety”; and concludes: “Without an element of the obscene there can be no true and deep æsthetic or moral conception of life.” Another passage quite in the spirit of Butler is that in which Mr. Ellis points out that the lunatic asylum is an instrument for spiritual castration; and adds: “If the lunatic asylum as at present established had existed three thousand years ago, we may or may not have had Greece and Rome—it is doubtful—but we should certainly have

had no Old Testament and no New. The Hebrew religion would have perished of anæmia and the Christian could never have been born . . . had there been a lunatic asylum in the suburbs of Jerusalem, Jesus Christ would infallibly have been shut up in it at the outset of his public career."

On one point Butler, if he were alive, would perhaps differ with Havelock Ellis. The former's famous doctrine of serving both God and Mammon might obviously be extended to apply to God and Moloch, and we can imagine his laodiceanism countenancing and counselling an acquiescence in the world madness of the War which to the latter is utterly abhorrent. On this subject appears the quality of Mr. Ellis's mind and style which separates him from Butler. He is tender-minded, where Butler is tough-minded. The passages in which he denounces the superior people who took on themselves the blood guilt of the war, and maintained their innocence with self-righteous pharasaism, and now sit complacently licking their chops with the saliva of hypocritical pacifism are the most eloquent which Mr. Ellis has ever written. In invective and in pathos they remind one of Ruskin, the chief of the tender-minded.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Introducing Intelligence

The Nature of Intelligence, by L. L. Thurstone. With ten illustrations. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.00.

INTELLIGENCE testing is now, presumably, in winter quarters, overhauling its ammunition and refilling its ranks after its recent bloody battles. In those encounters, brought on by the disposition of the more ambitious testers to treat the nation to the same process of grading that had been carried through so triumphantly in the army, both the methods and the results of intelligence testing were called seriously in question, and by no one more pointedly than by Mr. Walter Lippmann in the pages of the *New Republic*. In one department the testing corps was particularly weak. To the question, "What is intelligence?"—a fair enough challenge to the inventors of the Intelligence Quotient—no answer could be found. No one knows. Not only that; the fact is notorious that the representation of intelligence as a separate "faculty" of the mind is based upon a psychology that is fast slipping out of the vocabularies of particular people. When threatened with an attack of theory the testers were under the necessity of retreating behind a smoke-screen of correlation statistics.

Dr. Thurstone's study may fairly be considered as an attempt to strengthen the lines at this point. Its author is not without fame as a tester of intelligence, especially of college students. When, two years ago, the newly inaugurated president of Colgate University proposed to create a selected aristocracy of brains at Colgate, his faith was pinned to the Thurstone system, worked out at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. The account we are about to receive has, therefore, a certain authenticity. It springs from personal acquaintance.

The leading motive of Dr. Thurstone's theory is that "psychology starts with the unrest of the inner self, and it completes its discovery in the contentment of the inner self." All that the book contains, of sense and nonsense, is implicit here. The idea is that actions "begin" not with the things that happen to one but with one's own insides. One has a

want or feels an urge. What will serve its purpose? Not the securely latched front door, nor the miraculously warm radiators, but—Ah!—the succulent steak at this very moment sizzling merrily over the coals. Impulse would ravish it at once. But intelligence consists in holding the lid on impulse, thoughtfully broiling the steak to a turn and setting it on the table, nicely trimmed with parsley. Then one eats a sophisticated meal, and psychology fades out on a closeup of the well-filled paunch.

This sequence has a further theoretical significance. Dr. Thurstone remarks that the field of psychology is contested by three sectarian combatants: orthodox psychology, behaviorism, and psycho-analysis. Why not resolve their strife? Nothing seems easier. The same formula that allocates intelligence threads the three schools onto a single string as "the three phases of a continuum." The psychoanalysts have dealt with our insides. They are, then, our first. The orthodox psychology has dealt with the mind. It is our second. Behaviorism rules over actions alone. It is our third. The series is complete. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your kind applause.

Behind this sleight of hand are a number of perfectly sound conceptions. The description of intelligence as trial and error adjustment is sound enough and familiar enough. The slip-up comes of supposing that this casting about which constitutes intelligent behavior occurs at a certain moment of time, separable from other moments when other types of behavior are paramount, or, again, that one casts about with the "mind" but acts with the arms and legs. Suppositions such as these will not bear scrutiny for a minute. The variability of human behavior is quite incontrovertible. But it is not spasmodic. The human species, being endowed with a uniquely generalized organism, and at the same time with a uniquely retentive central nervous system, makes of its life one long, unending experiment which becomes constantly more complex because memory and habit gather up all that happens into an increasingly rich repertory of techniques. All behavior is intelligent because all behavior is experimental. And all behavior is similarly habitual. Whether any moment is a particle more tentative than any other is open to grave doubt. Certainly the off-hand assumption that "reflection" is all intelligence and no habit, or stimulus-response reaction, is quite untenable. Mr. Watson has made it clear that reflection is word-behavior. As such it consists all too largely of the mouthing of ancient formulas. Furthermore, to "stop and think" may be merely to give way to an anxiety neurosis.

Indeed, there could be no greater folly than to relegate psycho-analysis to a "preintelligent" phrase of experience. The whole burden of the Freudian theory is that it includes everything. Its chief contribution to science is certainly its demonstration that human personality is compounded of complexes in which the whole environment and the entire past, reaching back even beyond birth, are knit together into an organic unity. And this is the theory which Dr. Thurstone uses as an instrument for amputating impulse! The case is the same with behaviorism. The whole gospel of behaviorism is that all that we call mind can and must be stated in the language of the organism. Dr. Thurstone proposes to adjust this dispute with the old psychology by assigning the mind to one combatant and the organism to the other. The behaviorists will, no doubt, be very grateful for this penetrating resolution of their argument. Finally, to leave no confusion unconfounded, Dr. Thurstone repudiates the stimulus-response analysis upon which orthodox

psychology is founded. The "inner self" is aboriginal. This, once more, upon the authority of psycho-analysis.

In sum, Dr. Thurstone gives intelligence a commonplace definition which he proceeds to rob of all vitality by amputation. He then justifies the amputation by a general hypothesis in which the disjecta membra of the leading psychological schools are somehow strung together, the torso of each being lost in the scramble.

Under these circumstances it would be futile to talk of testing, which, accordingly, is not mentioned in the book. The administrative cause has not been advanced by this theoretical excursion. Supposing Dr. Thurstone to be right, one could test intelligence only by catching the subject in a moment of reflection or somehow inducing him to turn on the tap. But even then one could not reach the scene of intellectual action. The intellectual process occurs in "mind" which is both impalpable in essence and "prior" to stimulus in action. All the tester can do is watch and see what happens and decide whether he likes it or not. Which is precisely what we have always done.

C. E. AYRES.

Straws and Prayer-Books

Straws and Prayer-Books, by James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. \$2.50.

MR. CABELL is, after all, a genealogist. Those who used to note the titles of certain volumes on lineage and the like, which served to finish, some few years ago, the list of his books on front flyleaves, were inclined to view such interests as forming a "side line"—as supplemental, incidental, and soon to be left behind; for surely that family fondness which so often seizes upon the Virginian could not last on indefinitely. Quite the contrary, however, for the present volume, with a last coup de main, turns the author's whole oeuvre into a genealogy, with all centuries and all countries subdued to one intimate purpose. He calls it a Biography. He might as well have called it—in all its subjectivity—an autobiography. He does here, for his own life-work, what he does in the book's later pages for the life-work of George Moore, whose recent collective edition he appraises as "component parts of the one longish book which every sincere literary artist perforce composes and of which his various publications are each a chapter." Yes, the absorbing and indestructible *Moi*, touched up, idealized, made presentable. The Man of Ebury Street is for Cabell—in one of his two major manifestations—the type of the self-respecting artist. "George Moore" is an edited and considerably embellished effigy devised by "Mr. Moore." The self-idealizer (with his eye on his ego rather than on the repellent workaday world) will prefer to present himself to the general company "shaved, and bathed, and becomingly clothed, and judiciously inspirited with alcohol."

It is the complaint of Mr. Cabell throughout most of the present book, that the American public continues to remember him for his free fling in *Jurgen* rather than inclines to visualize him in his more flattering totality. And when it is recalled that *Jurgen*, in some sense, performs the function of an interlude in his general scheme—is an "alcove," as he would say, along his "corridor"—his complaint seems to have some foundation. Pity that a few brash brushstrokes should prejudice the validity of his generalized and multitudinous portrait.

Just as George Moore is made to defend one angle of

the Cabellian fortress, so Joseph Hergesheimer is brought up to defend another. "Why," asks Mr. Cabell, "does a man write?" Consideration of this question is in fact the backbone of his book. Yes, why write? Why spend twenty years or more in the production of some sixteen or eighteen volumes? The novelist, as Mr. Sinclair Lewis took occasion to remind us, after the completion of several of his bulky masterpieces, is cut off from the world of his fellowmen and chained to a desk. His brightest and best years gone, gone!—when he might have spent them raving on the stock exchange, or ranting at Rotarian banquets. Solitude is objectionable, certainly, to the gregariously inclined. But Mr. Cabell is not, so far as I am aware, gregariously inclined. Rather, he nestles in a library. He doesn't mind his solitary labors; but he does ask why he has undertaken them in a country and a society which has so little real esteem for work of that character. It is here that he brings in Mr. Hergesheimer as first aid. Hergesheimer, he reports, wrote for fourteen years without result. Without recognition and reward, that is to say. Mr. Cabell advances this fact to strengthen his contention that "the main and the all-absorbing purpose of literary art is to divert the literary artist." It is the "escape," as they say. The artist turns his back on a disappointing and hateful world, and his face toward a fairer one of his own devising. But this seems to assume that a man always writes about what he likes. Yet there is a choice: one may rush forth, with a Cabell, and yodel about the things he likes, or one may glue himself to his own province, with an Ibsen, and yowl about the things he hates. Not everybody can make the world at will an equivocal fairy vista, or can perceive it, with painter's eye, as a mere stage décor. Some have found it a thumb-screw, others a rack. They write, just the same. The thing familiarly, if pretentiously, called "the urge" explains the matter as well as any theory of self-entertainment, and rather more fundamentally. The force behind has to be taken into account as much as the picture ahead. Cabell himself knows the urge and its inescapable power, if any writing man of our day does. He can fool part of himself part of the time, but not all of himself all of the time.

Cabell has endeavored to bestride our narrow world like a colossus. He straddles the Channel from France to England, and the Atlantic from England to Virginia. He even widens the world by annexing Heaven, Hell, and other vague, equivocal quarters. He is as free with time as with space. He is mediævally Gallic; he is eighteenth-century Georgian; he is a busy denizen of the Henrico County of to-day; he can dip back into Greece for serviceable myths; and he can fabricate his own undated legends at need and will. Of course he must have a definite ethnic basis, which is Anglo-Saxon in spite of all. As one of our blood, he approaches his material, as has been implied by others, in the combined spirit of a Marlowe and a Congreve, uniting the free imaginative flights of an early Elizabethan with the somewhat insolent license and élan of a wit of the Restoration. To top off all, he puts on the headpiece of a fifteenth-century French clerk; and thus equipped he juggles with most of the human interests and passions. He seems like a thaumaturge who is graduating into a demiurge—a large order.

With some considerable capacity for making a world of his own, he has become less and less satisfied with the world actually offered for his inspection, approval, acceptance. It is for himself to say whether he turned from our world out

of disappointment and distaste, or whether he tried his hand at another because he found that hand equal to the work. The theory of "the urge" (which he, least of all men, has escaped) allows validity to the second half of the alternative. It seems to have swept all his generations of men into an ordered cosmos. Yet a more important consideration remains. With his world now finished, drawn together, capped by that topmost coping which is the present book, what is to come next? A creator idly folding his hands? Merely a long contemplation of the completed work and a reiterated declaration that it is "good"? A frowning look toward the rival record of Genesis I., in that "bilious and insolent spirit" recently sketched by Mr. Mencken? Truly, the future presents its difficulties. Thanks may be offered by those artists who function on a lower and humbler plane.

HENRY B. FULLER.

Madness in the Diaphragm

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad, by Donald Ogden Stewart. New York: George H. Doran Co. \$2.00.

MR. AND MRS. HADDOCK ABROAD introduces into the written form of contemporary humor that element of logical madness which illuminates the evanescent genius of a few of our vaudeville, revue and movie comedians. This madness, however, did not come from vaudeville to Mr. Stewart's book, but from the organic sources of modern laughter, sources to which he has almost constant access. Ring Lardner has brought in the same element in those short lunacies which he calls plays; but these excursions of Lardner's into the madder field has been too swift and abstract to compare with Stewart's book.

Nor can Alice in Wonderland be made to serve as a comparison. Alice's adventures are fancifully inconsequent and have no meaning in the character of Alice, or of anyone else; they are timeless folly. But the Haddocks, as they go on their crazy way, are definitely placed in time and space. They come at the present moment from that Middle West which has and is still furnishing the neo-Masters school of writers with material for uninspired bitterness. But Stewart is not bitter nor even satirical about the Haddocks, he encourages them to the full and is as much amused with them as by them.

James Joyce's Ulysses is perhaps the most direct clue to the form which has served to release Mr. Stewart into the sanely crazy world of his laughter, as it will probably become increasingly the clue to many things in many books. Joyce, in his brothel scene, dramatizes the drunken imaginations of Bloom and Dedalus. Strange distorted happenings, mad people who turn into others without warning—these and many more appearances serve Joyce to throw unbelievable lights on those two main characters, as well as to exhibit his own immense, perverse humor. So, on another scale and plane, with the Haddocks. If the steward who shows them to their cabin suddenly becomes a real estate agent who purs about southern exposure and sea view; if an attempt to reach the deck steward and hire chairs becomes a scene in which two foolish women hold up a line in front of a theatre ticket-window and end their folly in the maw of a mechanical white whale, while the South Bethlehem Tonkunst and Liederkranz Society sings the final chorus, Gott Ist Ewig; if the sight of twelve waiters in the dining saloon precipitates Mr. Haddock into first a jury trial

and then his own nomination for a presidential candidate; if a rising elevator in a hotel becomes a ride for life or death; it is not only because Stewart wishes to make these scenes into excellent vignettes of satire, but also because the Haddocks' souls are filled with the tag-ends of modern life and stuffed with the mythology of the daily papers.

But there is a purer madness in this book which leads to such reflections as Mr. Perkins, the street cleaner who advises that the cuisine at the Ritz has fallen off and who hates horses, as the unwonted occurrence in the women's bath, as the captain of the ship who falls overboard three times, always "on purpose."

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad is far better than any of Mr. Stewart's previous books and the next will be as much better again if he will become self-conscious enough to give his style more consideration, for the sake of pointedness and economy and emphasis. He needs that discipline; but I hope that in acquiring it he will not become so self-conscious as to spoil the quality of his wit, for he has the spontaneous, gigantic crudity which is essential to our native humor and one of its grandest distinctions.

H. PHELPS PUTNAM,

Sard Harker

Sard Harker, By John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

SARD HARKER distinguishes itself amid the flood of autumn's books by unassailable evidence that it was written by a master of his craft; for Mr. Masefield pilots no unseaworthy talent, and his narrative answers to his will like a ship. The story of Sard Harker, first mate of the Pathfinder, who, forgetful of the girl he loved when a boy in quiet England, pursues her through visions and dreams afloat, and through violent experiences on shore, is very frankly one of adventure. Mr. Masefield is a rare author who owns both an inspired imagination and a broad background of powerful life; and these combine to give a dreadful actuality to the otherwise fanciful country of Santa Barbara, to the town of Las Palomas, to the setting of a prize-fight incomparably seen and described, to the shadowy mansion, Los Xicales, to the sinister figure of Father Garsinton, with his black magic, and to the places and people and pictures that haunt Sard's tortured pilgrimage through the mountains. In richness of material, in sheer abundance, the book is an amazing one. Yet those whose pleasure resides solely in the excitement and passion of Sard's enduring struggle across the Sierras, must miss the greater satisfaction to be found in a perception of beautiful workmanship. By means of a minute attention to realities throughout this part of the book, to ores, pebbles, flowers, grass, trees, to the cries and colors of birds, to the sight and sound of water, to the smell and taste of wild meat, to the sky, and to the subtleties of secret and primitive ruffians, Mr. Masefield, while maintaining an emphasis on Sard, his hero, has managed to produce the orchestral effect of a sustained, powerful tutti which rises to a crescendo and falls to a quiet—and somewhat unequal—closing. Done casually, in Mr. Masefield's matter of fact way; yet none the less warily. He is a precise master of all the means; one minor figure, Tia Eusebia, is identified through description, "a tall old proud-looking negress . . . a big straw Gainsborough hat upon her head . . . very heavy old silver earrings in her ears, which were small . . . walked like an empress"; while the breadth of Captain

Cary is caught in the pulse of the conversation ascribed to him. The latter is also described by a sea chantey; but this is a graceful gratuity, as are the verses about Sard, and the sonnets that make Don Manuel and Sard's ship, *The Pathfinder*, charming and memorable. It takes assurance and temerity to produce a Sard Harker—dissected parts are certain to be assigned to every romance from De Foe to Conrad, through Hugo and Melville and W. H. Hudson. Though it derive from the authoress of the *Odyssey*: what of it? One must use a certain amount of commonplace stock to build even the most original of castles in Spanish America. It is the execution that counts. And no one could improve on what Mr. Masfield has done in *Sard Harker*.

HELEN GOODSPEED.

The Return of Elsie

Elsie and the Child by Arnold Bennett. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$2.50.

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT could not find it in his heart to leave Elsie, the imperturbable brunt-bearer of Riceyman's Steps, at the end of that novel. Elsie was no ordinary character—she had suffered, she had known life, and though she wore for the most part a sort of unthinking brute stolidity, behind that front lay dewey spaces of emotion which even the trials of Riceyman's Steps could not entirely exhaust. Mr. Bennett found her good for half a book more. *Elsie and the Child* is not, as you might expect of the sequel to a book with a happy ending, about Elsie and her child, but about the passionate twelve-year-old attachment of Elsie's employers' daughter for Elsie. It deals with the upstairs and downstairs life in Elsie's employers' house, with the tensions and embarrassments and minor tragedies of a household, matters which Mr. Bennett enjoys with the honest pleasure of a man who knows what he can do well. With the fragile mesh of Elsie's feelings he does wonders of subtle analysis, but in the end Elsie takes on too many of the perceptions and sensibilities of Mr. Arnold Bennett. She suffers, the imponderable Elsie, from pathetic fallacy.

The stories which fill up the book are stories by Mr. Arnold Bennett—polished, inimitable, a little tired perhaps, but certainly all seconds from the best of light fiction.

E. V.

The Shirt

The Shirt, by Peter E. Wright. New York: George H. Doran Company \$2.50.

ONCE upon a time there was in the Republic of Caria a merchant who by successive acquisitions became owner of the greater part of its wealth. At his death it passed to his son Charles." So begins the melting of a wax figure which deceives no one. Mr. Wright pointed out once, when pointing was not polite, that the Supreme War Council was not above human frailties despite its magniloquent name. He has remained in this frame of mind. Now comes, in the form of a fable and a Gulliverism, a most suave, sprightly, neat, devastating disposal of the whole of civilization, or that part of it, at least, which is provided by Europe and America. The pseudonyms are a mere transparent trick for clearing the reader's mind of real implications. Crete, where most of

the action takes place, is England, and the Carians, "who stayed too late at the office to be bothered with even those habits which nature has implanted deepest in man," so that such as were born there "had the look of having been hastily begotten between business hours"—are most assuredly Americans. Safe in his pseudo-imaginary world Mr. Wright can simplify and exaggerate without dragging the ball and chain of actuality. It is the refuge of the serious cartoonist.

This book has the double merit of a mellowness, a sort of sophistication of satire, and a refreshing novelty. It is always entertaining and very often true.

E. V.

Red Dawn

Red Dawn, by Pio Baroja. Translated from the Spanish by Isaac Goldberg. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

AFTER the rocket, the stick! In *The Quest* and *Weeds*, the first two volumes of his trilogy, *The Struggle for Life*, Baroja illuminated startlingly certain dark wastes of human nature. In this third volume, the vivid, grotesque, at times repulsive, pictures of life are crowded to the wall by long disquisitions on different phases of anarchism. There is no trace of plot (not even of an anarchistic plot); the new characters are principally specimens of anarchists; there is almost no movement in the series of disjointed scenes through which figures of types unknown to most of us mouth their theories; there is, indeed, still something of the atmosphere of Spain, but this is blurred by too free use of American idiom in the translation.

If the theme of the work, as a whole, is the futility of human effort, then the title of this last volume is magnificently ironical and its last words are symbolic—"It had grown dark." The greater the pity that a theme of such inevitable appeal should have been marred in its conclusion by dull expositions of theory. A work great in intention but of imperfectly realized art.

E. R.

Contributors

ERNEST MINOR PATTERSON is a professor of economics in the Wharton School of Commerce and Finance, University of Pennsylvania.

BERTRAND RUSSELL is the author of *Bolshevism: Theory and Practice*, *The Analysis of Mind*, *The A B C of Atoms*, and other books.

LEWIS MUMFORD is the author of *Sticks and Stones: An Interpretation of American Architecture and Civilization*.

A. R. ORAGE, for many years editor of the English publication, *The New Age*, is the author of *Nietzsche in Outline and Aphorism*, *Readers and Writers*, and *Consciousness: Animal, Human and Superman*.

BABETTE DEUTSCH is the author of *Banners*, a book of verse.

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER, poet and essayist, is the author of *The Musical Amateur*, *Magic Flame* and *Other Poems*, and *Fiddler's Luck*.

WITTER BYNNER is the author of *The Beloved Stranger*, *A Canticle of Pan*, *A Book of Plays*, etc.

HENRY B. FULLER, novelist and poet, is a frequent reviewer for the *New Republic* and other periodicals.

H. PHELPS PUTNAM is a poet. He occasionally reviews books for current periodicals.

HELEN GOODSPEED is a student at the University of Chicago, a writer of verses and reviews.

THE etchers represented are outstanding leaders in their field. They are of no one school. They are neither all "modern" nor all "conservative." They were selected chiefly because of their Americanness and their wide range. The work of no one of them resembles that of another (either of this or of any other group). They are in the fullest and best sense, original and individual.

ERNEST HASKELL,

a master technician represented in this set by "Sentinels of North Creek" is perhaps the closest student of the art of etching in this country. We are extremely fortunate in having one of his latest plates, a marvel of clean line, economy of means of expression and rhythmic design. He frankly admits the debt he owes to Rembrandt and Leonardo.

PEGGY BACON,

in "The Promenade Deck" (the single dry point of the set), reveals herself as a most penetrating depicter of character. A shoe by her needlepoint tells the story of its wearer. There is wit and biting satire in her populous plate and a wealth of keen, kindly fun.

JOHN MARIN'S

fine contribution will inevitably offend, intrigue, startle and delight. It is a characteristic piece of work, defiant of academic standards, pulsing with desire, quivering with emotion, tragically sure and unsure at the same time. This plate is a synthesis of sensation—the artist's own and his contemporaries'.

HAYES MILLER,

one of the most thoughtful and thought-provoking of American artists, contributes "Play," a study of three nudes, a woman and two children. There is a stark profundity, a serene dignity, an almost austere sincerity about Hayes Miller's work that marks him as a kind of ironic modern Ryder, aloof, alone, mysterious.

EDWARD HOPPER,

whose "Night Shadows" is included in this set, is a finder of beauty in the seemingly commonplace. Robustly American, he knows how to make even the supposedly hideous, gabled house of the 70's sing with design. Light (as in "Night Shadows"—perhaps his finest single plate) plays an important part in all his work.

JOHN SLOAN,

lover of cities, Dickens-like chronicler of American life, also contributes a "best" plate, "The Bandit's Cave"—a Greenwich Village night scene, wherein hesitating maidens are being urged by their escort to enter the alluring door. This plate is not only a superlative example of etching, it is a rich harmony of design in characterization, in form, in depth and in feeling.



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